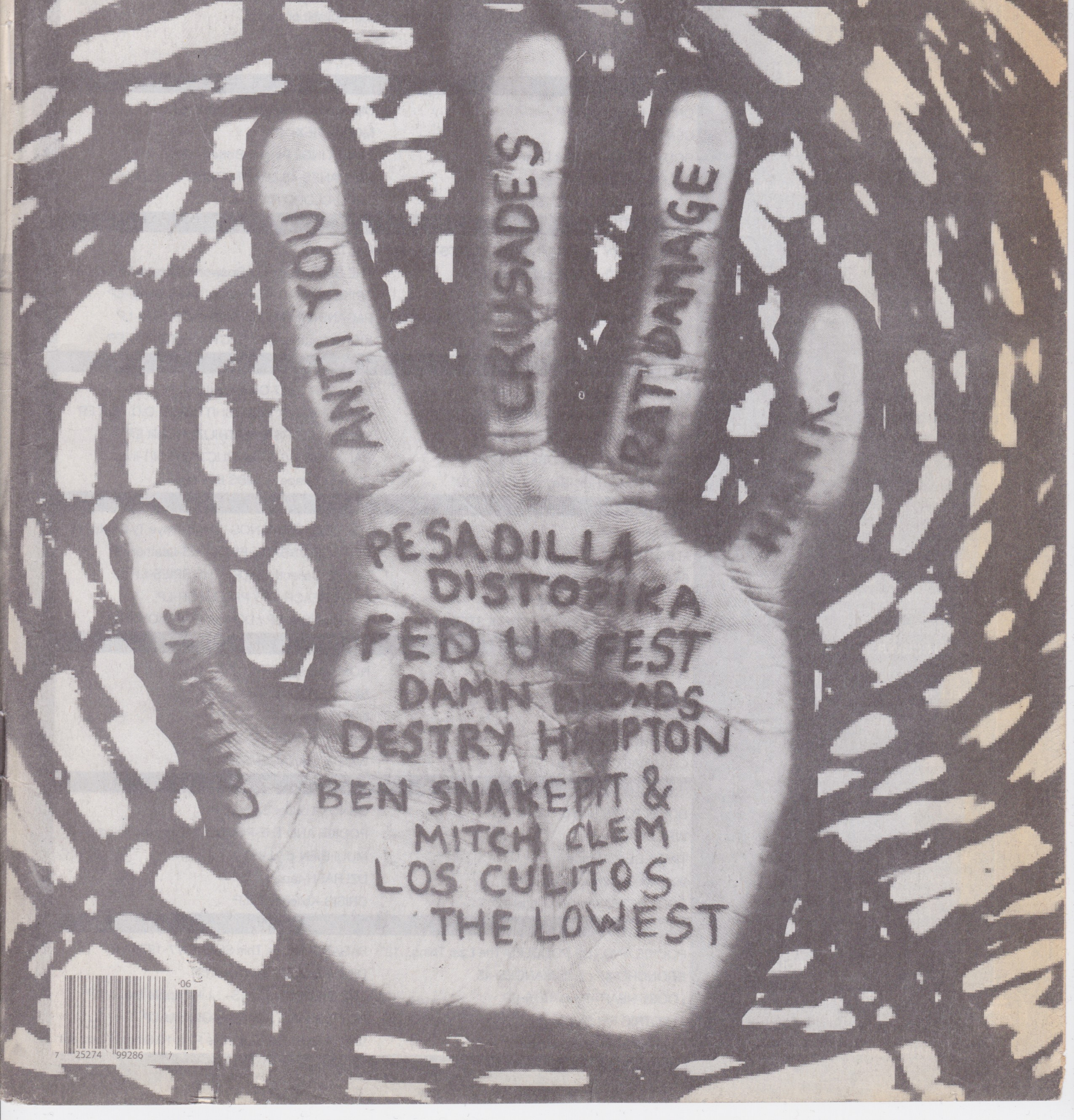
MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

Number Three Hundred and Seventy Three - June 2014
Four Dollars and Ninety-Nine Cents



MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

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- V/A-TAANG! Records: The First 10 Singles-box set

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TOP 10

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RAY LUJAN

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- THE CRY!-Dangerous Game-LP
- DIME RUNNER-Can't Express/Drink It Up-45
- DUFFY'S CUT-CD / THE MANGES-45
- PAGANS-What's This Shit? 1977-1979-LP
- RUBELLA BALLET-Planet Punk-CD
- STILETTO BOYS-Liberator-CD
- NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS-live
- BAD SPORTS-live / TOY DOLLS-live

LYDIA PHELPS

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- DIE SCHACT-Halber Selbstbetrug-EP
- OBEDIENCIA-El Ángel Exterminador-EP
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- POOKIE AND THE POODLEZ-12"
- DARK BEACH-Scream Queen-EP
- AUTISTIC YOUTH-Graves-EP
- THE MONS-Asshole-EP
- RUINED FORTUNE-LP
- LINDSEYS-Religious Sextets-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

Busy documenting the here and now of punk with his camera...

RAY SUBURBIA

- CRISIS-Collectiv-2xLP
- ACCIDENTE-Amistad Y Rebelion-LP
- OBEDIENCIA-El Ángel Exterminador-EP
- BALCANES-Plataforma/Autopista-45
- VÅNNA INGET-Ingen Botten-12"
- MORAL VOID-Beach/Wolves-45
- ELECTRIC EELS-Jaguar Ride/Splittery Splat-45
- DIE SCHACT-Halber Selbstbetrug-EP
- OBLIVIONATION-Cult of Culture-EP
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- POOKIE AND THE POODLES-The Last Thing…-12"
- LINDSEYS-Religious Sextets-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Distort #43*
- *Cretins of Distortion #3*
- *In Pace Requiescat*
- *Gag Me With A... #10*
- *My Stupid Life / Snakepit*
- *The Soda Killers #6*
- *Trust #164*
- *Mermadia Bomb Italia #44*
- *Agony Bag Vol. 2*
- *Brutal Death Ends A Man's Dream*

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#186/November '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#188/January '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/February '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/March '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/August '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/October '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, GOre Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#234/Novomber '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235 December '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war Scene Reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in IRaq," "Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/January '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/March '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/April '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston & Germany Scene Reports.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04. The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/Sept. '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjertestop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. the Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/ Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Reports.
Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report.

#335/April '11. Siege, Crazy Spirit, 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian Scene Report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/ Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This is LA not L.A.: '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY Scene Report.

#339/August '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cocskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/ Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History Part 2.

#340/September '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State POison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Deaf Club Oral History, Czech Punk History Part 3.

#341/October '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel Zine.

#342/November '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/December '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R., Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor.

#344/January '12. OBN IIIS, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Blookrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary part 1, Means to an End Fest, Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matresses Zine.

#345/February '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report Part 2, the Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/March '12. Bärchen und die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spokey Jacket, Krömosom Tour of Japan, Globsters, Nigh Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise records, Refuse records.

#347/April '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester Zine, Iron hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii Scene Report.

#349/June '12. Omegas, Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanasia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Inly Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek Scene Report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyre, Chis Boarts Larsen, Maria de Piedade Morais.

#351/August '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's Worst & Best, the Tim Yo Covers & Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Juan y Diëgo, Banran.

#352/September '12. Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaarallinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/October '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Peruvian Underground Part 1, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/November '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic ID, Maximo Volumen, O Inimigo, the Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Diary Part 2, Girth records.

#357/February '13. Forward, Hounds of Hate, Contorture, Kicker, Nothing, Lunatic Fringe, Detonate records, Beatnik Termites, Detroit scene report.

#358/March '13. 2012 Year End Top Tens, Brontez Purnell, Potty Mouth, Nitad, Schizophazia, East Anglia scene report.

#359/April '13. Sickoids, Hassler. Divorce. Cancer Spreading. la Flingue. the Line. White Murder, the Paper Bags versus the Meat Sluts. Greenville, SC scene report.

#360/May '13. Stress, Proxy, the Kids, Kalte Lust, HIRS, Autonomy, Nuclëar Fröst, Dead Air Studio, Blood Orange Infoshop, Death Traitors, Elks Lodge Massacre Revisited.

#361/June '13. Organize and Arise, Fear of Extinction, The Rats Tour Diary, Kathleen Hanna, The Shorts, Hard Feelings, No Power, Melusaaste, We Got Power Zine Part I.

#362/July '13. Jeff Paul, Trust Zine, Shaved Women, Hondartzako Hondakinak, Kurraka, Born Wrong, Homicide, United Arab Emirates & Toronto, Canada scene reports, We Got Power Zine Part II.

#363/August '13. Las Otras, Toinen Vaihtoehto zine, Sudor, Terveet Kädet, Black & White, Stillsuit, Taquila Mockingbird, Arturo Vega, Ruined Families, Baitline!!! zine, R.O.T.T.E.R., No Mistake, Siren Songs, Yorba Linda, CA scene report.

#364/September '13. Last Chaos, Snob Value, NE! Records, RAD, Asile, Whatever Brains, The New Flesh, Trashies, Forgotten Generation, Nightfall/ Population Zero, Texas Filth Scene Report.

#365/Ocotber '13. Condition Tour Diary, Zudas Krust, Doomed Society Radio, Kontrasekt, Bib Black Cloud, Hero Dishonest, Violent Party, Helvetin Viemärit, Malcolm, Clearview Records, Brno, CZ Scene Report.

#366/November '13. Chaos Destroy, Permanent Ruin, Thisclose, Halsey Swain, Rosa Apatrida, No More Fiction, Räjäyttäjät, Nudes, Tarantuja, Destruye y Huye, Vertical House Records, Punk Photo Roadtrip.

#367/December '13. The Mob, Creem, Gag, generacion Suicida, Good Throb, Force Fed Drugs, Total Trash, Life Chain, Concrete Worms, War// Plague, Julia Ostertag, Bad American.

#368/January '14. Queer Issue with Anti-Corpos, Shopping, Glory Hole, Porcelain, Strong Boys, Ejaculoid, Closet Burner, Peeple Watchin', Samuel Shanahoy, Dures et Gays, Priests, Groke, Screaming Queens tour diary, Queer Zine Fest London, International Queer Scene Report.

#369/February '14. Dezerter, Arctic Flowers, Stoic Violence, Strange Factory, Gobierno Militar, Poliskitzo, Voight-Kampff, Rat/Xerox, Nü-kle-er Blast Suntan.

#370/March '14. Year End Top Tens, Nervosas, Komplikations, Mallwalkers, New Orleans punk documentary Almost Ready.

foreigndistros

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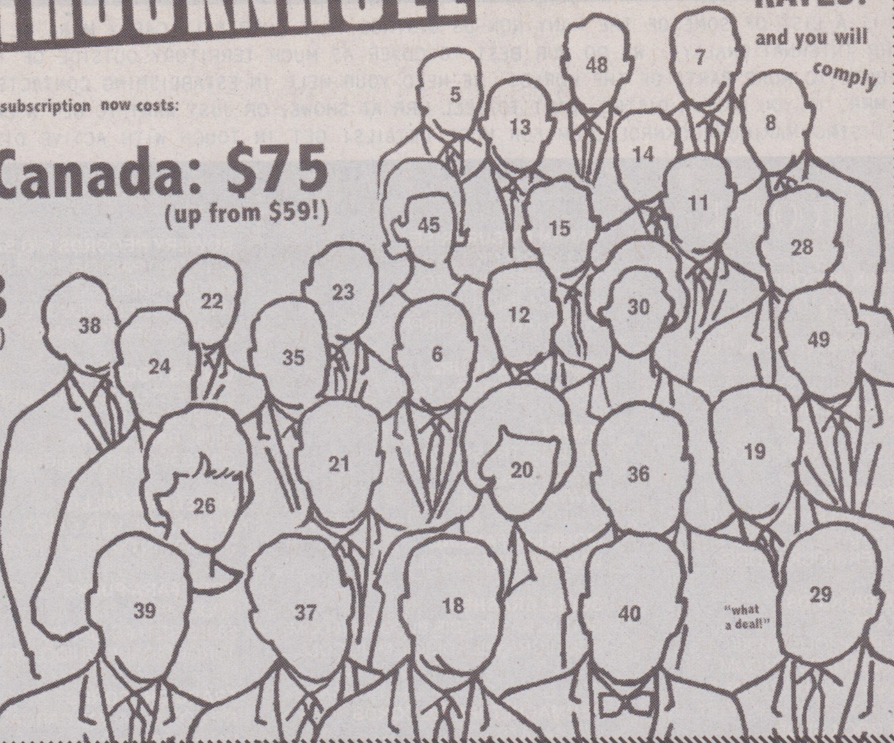

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Yo MRR—

I had a dream about you: there were some men standing around, the new issue came out and they'd done the cover: a white photo journalist was on the front and if you opened the mag flat, you could see he was photo-ing a silkcreen, a punk screen in a metal frame, it was glossy. There was an article inside that was like "Am I just a wash up in printed Dr. Marten boots?" with a pic of a woman in her mid 40s, a face shot. The pages were glossy too. We all thought *MRR* lost its edge! Who had taken over?!

Then I was going to get my bridge pierced. Oh! My face! I was scared! The pierced was a super punk woman with huge dreads and elf ears. She talked about her female sexual organ piercing and how she hadn't necessarily succeeded at cleaning it. I wanted to *not* get that piercing but felt obliged…

Long live *MRR!* Welcome Diana, you're gonna slay at this.

Love,

—Erica Freas

Dear MRR—

Haven't been a reader in a while, so I'm sorry for sounding like an ignoramus but I'm going to Europe in the fall and wondering if there's been any Ukrainian punk scene updates or news recently, that you have heard of. My googling skills are sorely lacking and searches are coming up dry. Thought I'd see if you guys had heard anything.

Thanks,

—Corey

PO Box 436

Waldo, FL 32694

Dear MRR—

I've been a fan of MRR for a long time now, since my early teens. I am currently 25 now. I've never wrote you all before, but if there was a time to, it would be now.

I'm currently locked up in Avenal State Prison is California, doing a four-year term for a beer- run that got classified a robbery.

Thankfully, since I've been in prison, I've run across some old *MRR*s that where collecting dust when I found them. The day I found them was great. I felt like a little kid in a candy store. I grabbed them and ran to my bunk and spent the day reading *MRR* front to back. Prison is a lonely place for a punk. Every day is a struggle. There are no others like me at this prison, which makes it hard to find a friend. I'm the one and only punk on the yard, it's sad really.

Yet apparently there was another punk long ago, considering I found a *MRR* in the first place. It seems I got only one thing in common with people in prison, we all like tattoos and we all got lots of them, except mine are *not* based on hate and racially motivated causes. I miss being in contact with my own kind.

It's quite embarrassing to say this but it seems the scene I was a part of out there has forgotten me. I grew up in a small town in the East Bay called Newark. We have always had a great scene. Yet I've heard from no one. The little support I do have is from my grandmother.

I miss punk dearly. I miss the shows, people and unity. I've got six years left. I can't wait to feel and hear the music again.

Thank you *MRR* for taking me out of this place. Anyone feel free to write me, pen pals are always good.

—Nathan Weaver

#G47359 (320-36UP)

PO Box 903

Avenal, CA 93204

To whom it may concern—

We send you our encouragement in its most brilliant form, you who have made it possible for us to have a voice. We exhort you to never become disenchanted or desensitized; these are two words you must never harbor against us.

Please, do not become like the altruist who goes to college to become a drug counselor and ends up becoming a probation officer. Maybe it was all the clients who didn't care. Sometimes altruism is thankless work. Perhaps it as the client who did care, but he OD'd. We will never know. But somehow along the way the altruist became desensitized, disenchanted. Somehow his heart became hard.

Do not forget that selling records ethically is beautiful. Please remember that putting out a DIY zine is vital. Never overlook the fact that promoting shows with integrity and consideration towards both bands and fans is an honorable, respectable way to earn a living.

But these things alone are not the real objective, are they?

The objective is to participate in the creation of art.

And there will never be a shortage of artists. Not businessmen with guitars and paintbrushes. Artists.

Who would rather die alone, in poverty, and hope that someday our opus will be discovered and cherished by just one beloved grandchild than see the value of our work tarnished by corrupted syndication.

We're still here, man.

We didn't disappear with the weirdos. We weren't killed by hardcore. We'll never swim in the main stream. But we're still out here for sure. And… as for the rest of you's…

Give me a fucking chance not to sell out, man. I would never compromise my code of artistic ethics for some lousy money. Fuck, I have a hard enough time living with myself as it is. I may be a desperate junky, but there are just some things I won't do.

If you ever cared about having a personal connection to your audience, how

can you live with yourself. I'm not anti-success. I'm against the middleman whose house payment is riding on your success. Pinching, watering down and cutting our dope.

I was hurt and alone with nowhere to go when I found you. The thing that you created got me through the wicked night. And for that I gave you my love. But you don't get to play your songs in between Miley Curys videos and commercials for breast implants and still have you love, you just don't. And if that doesn't matter to you, then fuck you.

I thought that the thing you created was intended to expel hurt, to commiserate with someone who maybe feels the way that you do. But now I see that you don't care about any of that shit. If you did there wouldn't be a businessman between us.

If some people ever cared enough about something I wrote to love me, I would be so fucking stoked. I would never betray them for fame. No way. I just don't want to hurt any more. And I know that the pain, the conditioning, the backstabbing friends, the helplessness, all of it would somehow hurt less if I could create something that took a piece off someone else's hurt away.

How could I ever abandon that person for fucking money? That's fucked up. I'll never sell out. Fuck you.

Sincerely,
—Sean Thomas Dunne
#AN4246, Fac. E, Building BH, 135L
PO Box 107
Tehachapi, CA 93581

Dear MRR—

In issue #372 you reviewed *General Speech* fanzine Vol. 6. The reviewer stated that out of the whole thing, what they found to be "most remarkable" was the printed want list found in the back of the zine. Some people might have taken this as a slight against the other content in the zine, that the want list was the best part, but the highly favorable review of the rest of the issue's content leads me to believe that that is not the case.

I thought the review actually was maybe one of the best zine reviews I've ever gotten, and I felt like the reviewer really enjoyed reading it after I read the review, which is great. The want list has actually gotten quite a few comments over the last couple years. I hit some dead ends and was about to make some Old West "wanted" style posters with descriptions and photos of rare '80s and '90s HC demos and fax them out to punk record shops all over to pin up on bulletin boards. Finding these things is so important to me, so I couldn't help but write to you guys after reading the review.

I hope that printing my letter gets me some emails and thought your readers might be interested to see it, so here it is as it appears in the zine:

Originals preferred, Dubs / CD-R happily accepted:

No – Not For Sale Demo (Early 80's Japan) Top Want!
V.A. – Ningen Omnibus (Tape Version) Top Want!
Poison Cola – Demos 1-6 Top Want!
Asylum – Live (Uk Stoke On Trent)
A-Voice – Demo/Live (Japan, Sapporo)
Bandit Criminal (Bandit) – Demos 1-3 (Japan, Kitakyushu)
C. Exclude – Demo (Japan)
Chaos C.H. – Drink Beer Or Die Demo (Japan)
Chiba City Japan Demos: The Splash, KKK, 暴力集団 X (Boryoku Shudan X), Knuckle, Grasp
Criminal – Demo (Japan)
D** Öw** – Demos + 7" EP (Japan)
Damos – Demo/Live (Japan)
Derange – Demo/Live (Japan)
Eggs – Demo (Japan)
Escrementos -–Demo (Spain)
Forswear – Demo (Japan)
G.J.P.B. – Demo (Japan)
Gai – Damnation Version 1 (10 Track Version)
Hackney, Uk Live Sets: Sons Of Bad Breath, Poison, Eat Shit, Blower, Goatsbreath And The Camel Cocks
Skumdribblerz – Live Sets (Nottingham, UK)
Initial Order – Demo (Japan)
Insurrection – Demo (Uruguay)
Jhonio 47 – Demos 1 And 2 (Osaka, Gloom Members)
Killing Noise – Demo (Japan Pre-GJPB)
恐悪狂人団 (Kyouakukyojindan) – Demos 1982-1988 (Japan)
Maximum Hardcore "The Video" (Psycho Sin)
Mindsuck – Demo (Japan)
Necrophilia – Demo (Japan)
Pinocchio – Demos 1-2 (Japan)
Rawneck – Demo And Live
Redrem Voice – Demo (Japan)
Rustic Top Dogs – Demo (Niigata)
Shizuoka City Demos: Neurose Demo Cover Photocopy, Piss, So What, Mental, Drug, Swastika, Semetery, Cement, Steel, Vryker, Stifle Roam, Sugar, Raid, Drug
Sicilian Blood – Demo 1 (Japan)
Stalin Ism – Demo (Japan)
Swung Dash – Demo (Japan)
Tokyo Hardcore Demos And Live Stuff: Accomplice, Geshpenst, Blaze, Juntess, Ouda
Treason – Demo (Ca Anarcho Punk 1980's)
V.A. – Human Around Peace Tape (Japan, Mie City Comp)
V.A. – Museum Records Compilation Tape Vol. 1
V.A. – Museum Records Compilation Tape Vol. 3
V.A. – Toyohashi City Hardcore Tape "Violence Panik" Tape (Japan)
Wild Bonvers – Demo (Japan)
Witch Hunt – Demo (Nik From Napalm Death's Peace Punk Band)
Xylum – Demo/Live (UK)

Photocopies Wanted:

Atrocity – Demo (CA Anarcho Punk 1980's)
Autodefensa – Demo (Spain)
G-Anx – Demo 1 (Sweden)
Gp - Demo (Colombia)
Herpes Distress – Demo (Yugoslavia)
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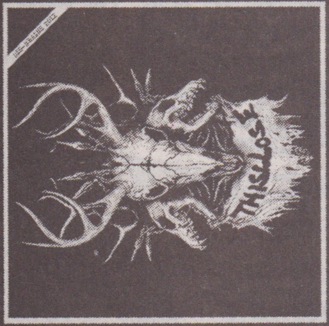

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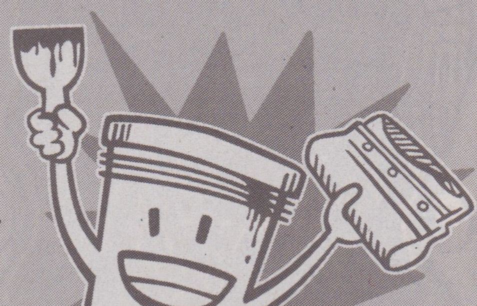

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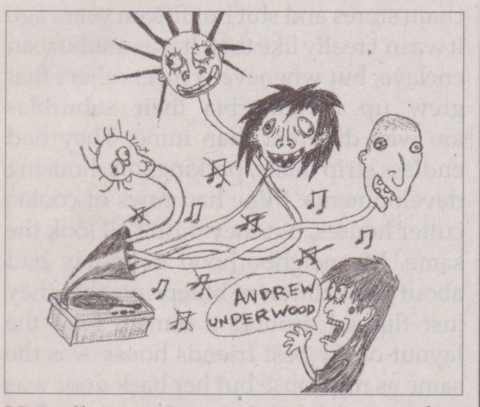


Hey all, sorry I was absent last month. I suffered a late realization that the only time I mentioned the fact that I was having a kid was in the April Fool's edition, not realizing that such an announcement could easily be taken for a prank. Please rest assured that there is in fact a little baby Underwood (almost seven weeks old as of this writing) who is healthy, happy and cuter than three puppies and a baby seal stuck together with the world's most adorable glue. But having a brand new baby isn't always compatible with having a deadline. Indeed, sometimes I am amazed at how much chaos can fit in that little ten-pound package, until I remember how much chaos can fit on a little seven-inch record…

Take the new LASTLY EP for example. Longtime readers will know that I've been a rabid fan of lastly since their vinyl debut on the heavy-hitting *Yotsuva* compilation where they more than held their own alongside some of the best noizy bands in the scene today. The following EP was one of the standout records of 2011, so I had very high hopes for this latest, and thankfully *Crazy Fucked Up Daily Local* does not disappoint. The earlier stuff was nearly pure GLOOM worship, crazed noizy hardcore with very loose structures, driven mostly by the drumming and vocal. This new material is not more polished, but it is definitely more rhythmic, reminiscent of the martial cadences of DIS-BONES-era DISCLOSE and with a ramped-up prominent bass assault (especially on the record-closing "It Depends on Myself") that's very ZYANOSE. With only four songs flying by at 45 RPM, this definitely leaves me wanting more, and I can only hope that there is more material from this session that will emerge soon. It probably goes without saying, but of course you need to fucking get this as soon as possible. (Hardcore Survives, hcsurvives.exblog.jp/)

DISCLOSE are also the major point of inspiration for both sides of the CONTRAST ATTITUDE/ASPECTS OF WAR split EP. That being said, don't think for a minute that both sides are identical. CONTRAST ATTITUDE are like the fine wine of DISCLOSE worship, mature and subtle masters of the d-beat craft whose every release is better than the one before and always offer endless replay value. These two tracks surpass even their usual high standard, absolutely brilliant driving d-beat played with full passion and great fury. "Mind of Devil" features an ingeniously catchy central riff and a brilliant solo that gradually emerges from an obscuring cloud of noize, while "Black Despair" is a full-throttle metallic rager that should be a highlight of the live show for years to come. ASPECTS OF WAR are satisfying like a freezing can of beer after a long day in the hot sun: not at all complex, but perfect for the moment. Their medium is straightforward Scandi-worship in the style of early DISCLOSE, with a heaping side of SHITLICKERS and ANTI-CIMEX of course. Simple solos, excellent propulsive drumming and shouted anti-war vocals are the order of the day, but unlike so many of their contemporaries, ASPECTS OF WAR do this style with enough commitment and sincerity to breathe life into the tired style. They've drawn a lot of buzz due to their ear-shattering live show, and I very much enjoyed the tracks on the *Annihilation* 4-way split LP so the quality here is no surprise, but when paired with CONTRAST ATTITUDE…damn: early contender for Top Ten of the year status. I hate that I didn't get to see these bands together on the East Coast. (Konton Crasher, kontoncrasher.blogspot.com/)

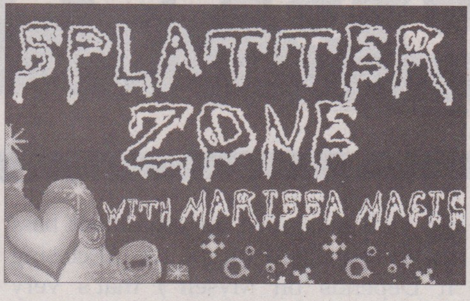
These Japanese bands are breaking my fucking heart with all these East Coast tours lately, as SYSTEM FUCKER's new LP was also put out in advance of their recent East Coast visit, and wow is it a change from their earlier material! Their Crust War Records EP and split with D-CLONE showcased a scrappily chaotic, nearly crasher-style crust band, a band that is nowhere to be found in these grooves. This SYSTEM FUCKER 2.0 is a tight, slightly noodle-y traditional Japanese hardcore band, clearly influenced by the heavyweights of the style (DEATH SIDE, WARHEAD, NIGHTMARE, etc.). Few bands can pull off this style convincingly, and while these cats may not yet have the panache of an ILLYA or a KIBA, they're not half bad at it either. "Create New World" is probably the highlight of the album to me, an ambitious and over-the-top epic slab of hardcore that encapsulates all the excess and joy of this style, from the raging solos to the tough-guy gang choruses (supplemented by members of ORGANISM) to the massive riffs. That being said, "I Run Through" has an awesome creepy horror intro and probably the best single breakdown-into-solo sequence on the album, so it's kind of a toss-up. It's an amazing transformation (I think only SELFISH have made a similar switch so convincingly, but that was over a much longer period of time), and I'm definitely interested to find out where the band goes from here. (Distort Reality, distortreality.storenvy.com)

While SYSTEM FUCKER are paying tribute to the epic metallic style of Japanese hardcore, SICKZ are representing the good old-fashioned rocking hardcore style of bands like early GAUZE, FUCK

GEEZ or LAUGHIN' NOSE. Indeed, the *Fuck System* EP is practically proto-hardcore style, containing a hefty punk influence in its occasionally sing-song vocal, swaggering mid-tempo riffs and even the simple retro-style sleeve artwork. This isn't at all my usual cup of tea, but it's honestly very good indeed, sounding like it could just as easily be an outtake from the *Tooth and Nail* comp as it could be from *City Rocker*. I have a sneaking suspicion that if this came from a sufficiently-hyped label and scene it would sell out in a day and have all the usual internet suspects praising its genius, but because it's an unheralded band from an obscure prefecture it'll probably sell out its 300 copy pressing and never be heard about again. Hopefully I'm just being a pessimist and we'll get to hear more from this band, because this is something different and quite worth hearing more of. (Hikan Label, hikanlabel@ozzio.jp)

I got some demos from the New York area that I had high hopes for, but one was overrated and the other one was just fucking stupid, so—I'll pass them over in favor of a band that never lets me down: D.H.K., and their new EP *Extincion*. I am in awe of this band's ability to write consistently memorable and desperate stripped-down D-beat after such a run of amazing releases. To come back in with a five song EP in early 2014 after putting out one of the best LPs of 2013 is accomplishment enough, but to follow that monster LP with another batch of timeless songs is something else. This EP is bookended by its highlights: "Jodido Dinero" is a classic early dis-core mid-tempo track in the style of MG-15, while "Por Ke Soy Punk" is a rare and surprising (if brief) foray into straight-up punk by DESTRUCCION HUESOS Y KRANEOS, paying appealing tribute to the early Spanish and South American founders before lapsing back into a driving d-beat hardcore track that would put any of their revivalist contemporaries to shame. One demo, two EPs an LP and one MRR compilation track later and these monsters still have yet to write a bad song. Amazing. (Hysteria Records, 538 Johnson Ave., Apt. 203, Brooklyn NY 11237)

Um, apropos of maybe nothing mentioned above I have nearly new copies of the AJAX and L.O.T.I.O.N. demos for sale or trade. Write me c/o *MRR* or at agunderwood@gmail.com for details. Or just write me and I'll send 'em to you. I'm really over it with New York these days.



The train had been sitting in the station for a half hour. A medical emergency. Single tracking. A station shut down. I've been here before, in the midst of massive Bart delays during rush hour, where once you get downtown everybody looks like a combo of the blank-eyed characterless fish on *Spongebob Squarepants* and bloodthirsty desperation. *I must get the fuck home, out of the way, everybody*. People fight, clawing through crowds, screaming at each other to make room and that there is no room. I've got nowhere to be so I opt to go to the mall instead of diving into that shit.

I have a deep love for malls. I don't even know why, nothing about it makes sense. I dislike shopping. I dislike people. But they feel strangely comforting, anonymous. There's something about the food court—bored teenagers handing out samples of meat, pretzel dogs with cheese sauce, a gigantic cinnamon roll, froyo. Or maybe my fascination with pop culture and how a mall fits into that or the absurdness of this big enclosed chunk of shops, something that feels so deeply bloated and American, but still exists as an institution worldwide. And also in general I love a spectacle; parades, fireworks, a gigantic bizarre church of materialism at it's finest. I browse the accessories, dig through the deeply discounted clothes at stores that my mother would refer to as "tart shops" (she said it in a funny way, not a derogatory way). Rarely buying anything (why do so many dresses have weird fucking holes everywhere these days?). Get a fountain soda the size of my head (I find this very aesthetically pleasing), people watch. I finally made it to the Mall of America in the fall after 31 years without it and I'm pretty sure I squealed the entire fucking time.

I'm in my work drag office clothe,s but I still look like trash—like the time I met my friend in Vegas for her 21st and we went to some club and tried to dress normal to up our chances of getting into said club. My friend hissed "it doesn't matter how we dress they still fucking know," as in, they fucking know we're freaks. No matter what we wear we just radiate it.

I grew up in Marin where now there are chain stores and shit but fifteen years ago it wasn't really like that. It was a suburban enclave, but whenever I meet others that grew up in suburbia their suburbias are way different than mine. They had endless strip malls, parking lots, housing developments. Mine had rows of cookie cutter houses, but they didn't all look the same. My neighborhood definitely had about three different blueprints that they just flipped around a bunch. Like the layout of my best friends house was the same as my house but her back door was my front door if that makes sense. The neighborhood was flanked by a marsh, a forested hill, a state park, and a Frank Lloyd Wright designed civic center. There was a mall that my mother referred to as the "emergency mall" (in this case she was being both funny and derogatory). It was small and kind of crappy (I guess? I actually have no idea). I think I hung out there once—we bought sparkly plastic top hats and liters of mountain dew. Why? I never liked mountain dew, I didn't like the mall—I'd rather be at home with my records or at the swamp getting high. We went to the joke gift store and giggled red faced at all of the dick shaped novelties. We huddled in groups on benches until the rent-a-cops dispersed us.

Once I went there on opening night of *Romeo and Juliet* starring Claire Danes (she was in *My So-Called Life* and *oh my god i know exactly how she feels, but why wouldn't you fuck jordan catalano?*) and Leonardo DiCaprio (teen hottie but now he has a big head and a tiny face [is that so mean to say?]). It was sold out so we bought tickets to *That Thing You Do* and snuck into *Romeo and Juliet*. My friends were bad kids, or as my mother would say "not academically inclined" (I think, in this case, it was meant as derogatory).

My parents were hippies, they had their wild years but really only held onto parts of their flower power past. There was never any processed food,

I didn't eat store bought bread until I was in my teen years and still to this day I rarely have jam from a grocery store. We weren't allowed to watch TV, not because of TV but because of the commercials—my mom didn't want us to watch the commercials. She didn't want us to beg for all the dumb toys and sugar cereals because that wasn't where her values were. She'd make granola, she'd send us outside and tell us to use our imagination. We had a royal court in a castle, which was really a couple of rotting wicker chairs under an awning. They listened to Country Joe and The Fish and Neil Young and Joni Mitchell. Only once my sister and I got into a physical fight, and my mother sat us down and explained to us about how terrible and destructive war is and how deeply disturbed she was to see her children invoking any type of violence and that she didn't want our home to be a place where things like that happened. I refer to them as hippies but if you say that to them my dad laughs and my mother always retorts with "we weren't hippies, we were counter-culture. Hippies leech off of other people and mooch their way through life—your father and I never did that."

So this is another thing, or I'm saying all of this to say that malls are a novelty, chain stores are a novelty, plastic life is a novelty, processed food is a novelty. It's still new and fascinating to me. Not quite a forbidden fruit but kind of.

And today at the mall, after I have bought two mini skirts for three dollars each, I debate between a gigantic cinnamon roll and froyo. I go for the roll and finish it before I even get to the platform, both feeling sick and regretting it and wishing I had more—feeling all together unsatisfied. The train is late but the crowds have dissipated, I guess they all *made it the fuck home*. I love the mall. Thank you, mall.

The April issue's column, was of course and April fools joke. I do not now, nor have I ever, played acoustic guitar. There is very little interest in '90s hardcore punk, despite the '90s nostalgia in re issue frenzy in the mainstream. And Pignose was once spotted playing a pennywhistle, but never a steel guitar.

April 1, 2014 did, however, mark the 20th anniversary of Extreme Noise Records. Extreme Noise is a DIY record shop in Minneapolis. It was founded in 1994, and loosely modelled on contemporary record co-ops like Epicenter and Reconstruction, both of which it as long outlived. 1994 was a whole different world, and Extreme Noise came out of the DIY politics and energy of that time. Hardcore and punk had been shut of out of the mainstream and ignored by all but a handful of record distributors, labels and shops. But it was bubbling up under the surface. The lean years of the late '80s and early '90s had forced the die-hards to build up an underground that was self-sustaining and fiercely independent. At some point bands like Green Day and the Offspring blew up, and there was a huge surge of interest in Punk. Then a few years later the internet took off and the DIY movement got swamped by a resurgence of commercialism from which it has not recovered.

In the early '90s there was a huge pent up hunger for punk music and culture, yet it was really only available through a handful outlets, this magazine, a few stores and mail orders, the occasional band coming through town. Hardcore had been big business for stores and distributors in the early/mid '80s. Black Flag, D.R.I. and such were big sellers and a whole crop of labels and distributors were catering to the scene. But things died out fast in the mid/late '80s as crossover, college rock and pop took over. Distributors went bust and dumped their hardcore stock for pennies on the dollar. Who remembers Greenworld, Rough Trade, Systematic and Cargo now? I remember spending hours digging through record bins in shops all over just to find one or two punk records scattered in with the rest. Now we have a whole shop full of punk records and people are largely indifferent. It's hard to explain how much hunger there was for something different in those days, and how underground it was. You really had to be dialed in to mail order to find much anything cool as stores weren't stocking it. This led to the rise of shops like Epicenter and Reconstruction. As for Epicenter, I think Tim was really set on trying to break the hold distributors had over labels back then, and wanted to see truly independent labels, stores and distributors. That is to say, he wanted to see a parallel network built one layer beneath the mainstream "alternative" which had turned it's back so quickly on hardcore in the late '80s.

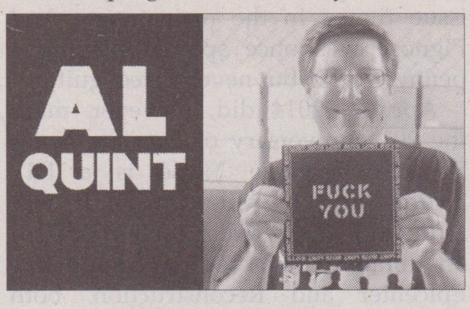
Back in 1994 things were really starting to pick up with DIY hardcore. The underground touring network was coming into maturity, and lots of bands and labels were starting up. Still most "independent" record shops had one or two bins of punk at most, and tended to focus on the biggest selling, most commercial bands. Let me back up and say, that even in the early '80s heyday of hardcore punk, underground hardcore records were *not* easy to find. Even very good record stores had maybe a handful of bins of punk vinyl, and this usually was very heavy on Alternative Tentacles and SST releases and bigger UK acts like G.B.H. and Exploited. You had to be really dialed in to find something like Rattus or Neos in all but the most cult of record stores. I grew up in DC and it wasn't until Vinyl Ink opened that we had anything like a solid selection of hardcore punk in stores. Yesterday and Today and RTX usually had just a tiny punk section and the rest of the store was REM, U2 and the like. If you were looking for something deeper than Circle Jerks or D.O.A. you had to mail order from Disorder, Toxic Shock or Ratcage. Those guys were the most. I sometimes look longingly at my old catalogs with all the $3 ppd bangers and wish I'd had more money back then.

So a group of local scenester types got together and starting a collective to open a record shop. A small storefront was soon rented and Extreme Noise came to be. When we first opened we had only a few boxes of records and sold most of them on the opening day. Over time though the store grew and do to the hard work and dedication of an all-volunteer staff. Extreme Noise outgrew its first location and moved to another. At the second location we were able to have shows in the basement, but we also faced high expenses and slow sales. In 1999 we moved again to our current

location. Around 2000 things really took off, punk hit some kind of all-time high in the early '00s as things like the Warped Tour and such worked their way through the mainstream. Our peak year was 2001, and things have never been quite as good financially. The CD sales that generated all that revenue in the early '00s are almost completely gone. In fact, sales are down almost 80% from our peak year. But there remain enough die-hard vinyl collectors to keep the store running. And it's mostly die-hard collectors who keep the doors open and the lights on today. It seems like I mostly ring up collectors in their 30s and hardly ever ring up high school age kids. I see the younger set at shows, but they don't seem to be buying many records. I guess, as long as they are getting value from the subculture I am not going to lose any sleep over it. Records and a record shop seem like the coolest thing ever to me, but probably don't mean much to someone who grew up only listening to music online.

In the 1990s I tended to think that running a DIY record shop was some kind of subversive act. Like it was fostering a counter cultural protest against mainstream youth culture. I felt that we could spread ideas counter to the consumerist mainstream. These days, I'm not so sure if any of that worked out the way I thought it would. Running a business tends to turn into just running a business, and aside from the occasional donation to a local cause, it's hard to say if Extreme Noise is making much difference in the world by just selling punk records. I can only hope that I might sell someone a record that will change or impact their life the way so many records have changed and impacted mine. At least I can say that we provide an alternative to the other record shops and youth culture offerings in town.

Extreme Noise does not sell online or do mail order, but if you are ever in town, drop by 407 West Lake St. and see what's going down. A whole store filled with punk records… It would have been a dream come true for me in high school, now it seems rather blasé. It seems like a resource that so much hard work has gone into over the years it rather taken for granted in this age of instant gratification and accelerated culture. But I am still getting amped up to work my shift and comb the used bins for treasure that everyone else has passed over. Hoping for another 20 years.



NOW, GO START YOUR OWN BAND!!!

I was tackling some long-overdue spring cleaning a couple of weeks ago (and still have a long way to go, sadly), when I came across an old tabletop Frogger video game that I got around 1982. It hadn't been touched in years. I picked up some batteries at the local dollar store, turned on the switch and, while there wasn't any sound, it still worked. Unfortunately, the passage of time seems to have diminished my hand/eye coordination and reflexes a bit because I wasn't exactly racking up the points. And I had to quit after a half hour or so because my carpal tunnel was acting up. Just like the STONES sang all those years ago—"what a drag it is gettin' old!" I'd better stop now before I really get depressed and depress you along with me.

I never got into the gaming thing. I was never very good at pinball, never mind video games. I'd plop quarters into a *Space Invaders* or *Asteroids* game when I was a freshman at Boston University and they installed a couple of those coin guzzlers in my dorm. *Pong* was about my speed and I probably spent too much time and money playing it with my sister when we went on a trip to DC in the '70s. Less money for useless trinkets at the Smithsonian. But the appeal of the video gaming thing has totally eluded me. When my younger nephew Koby (who was probably seven or eight at the time) challenged me to play a motocross video game with him, it was pathetic. It was "game over" within about 30 seconds. I even sucked at *Pong* when I played a few games with Ellen awhile back.

It's amazing how life-like those games are now. With some TV ads, I often can't tell if it's for some new action thriller or the latest warmongering game like *Call of Duty*. And while watching it, it makes me realize that some of the people weaned on those games are probably inspired to join the military and get to play *real* video games i.e. detonate bombs from remote locations. "Kill by remote control," to paraphrase a great TOXIC REASONS album.

I never tried playing games like *Rock Band* or *Guitar Hero*. I know my older nephew Josh played one or both of those games. I failed miserably trying to get him into punk (lord knows I tried) so I thought I'd at least get him to listen to some classic metal and hard rock, like BLACK SABBATH or AC/DC or MOTÖRHEAD. When I played him SABBATH's "Paranoid," he said he'd heard the song on one of the games. It's always interesting how people get exposed to some of the classic music these days. I won't even get into a discussion of so-called punk bands licensing their songs to those games. Another topic for another time, maybe. Maybe not.

Some years back, the local weekly rag *North Shore Sunday* had an article about those games. One of the teenagers they interviewed, Zach Dench, said he'd always wanted to play a real guitar but never took the time to practice. He was quoted as saying *"with this game, I can play the songs without really playing them."*

Maybe I'm an old fart (*guilty*!) but that stuck in my craw. Since the paper sometimes printed guest columns, I figured I'd submit one, which unfortunately, they didn't publish. I wrote that I found it disappointing to see people form virtual "bands" or simulate playing instruments. I wondered why people wouldn't try to form a *real* band? I wrote, *"Learn to play an instrument, learn to write a song. Don't just pretend you're doing it. Just do it for fun, have some kind of creative outlet that doesn't always involve a video screen and a joystick."*

I mentioned the BIG BOYS and their slogan, "Now, go start your own band!!!" Maybe it's corny but I always found that incredibly inspiring and I was *very* fortunate to see this band play in Cambridge, MA in 1983. Some of the best people you'd want to meet (R.I.P. Biscuit). I noted that their whole attitude was welcoming and that there was no separation or demarcation between band and audience. While the members of the

BIG BOYS were solid musicians, they weren't rock stars or guitar heroes—just four guys having the time of their lives creating their own music.

I wrote about having been in bands and that the fact that I could barely play bass or write songs and have a limited vocal range didn't stop me. Maybe it should have but I didn't let those minor details get in the way. Of course, there was the life-long fantasy of being in a band. When I was a kid, I'd play a hockey stick shaft or sing into a hairbrush in front of the mirror and pretend I was a rock performer. Laugh away, dear readers—I'll bet just about everyone reading this sang in front of the mirror while playing air guitar. And if you're saying no, I'll bet you're lying.

I tried to learn how to play guitar a few times when I was a teenager, much like Zach. I could never get the hang of it. I didn't even pick up a bass until I was 21. My rabbi's son Brian had a sweet Rickenbacker bass. I went over to his house, he showed me how to play it, a little, and then said I could borrow it and practice on my own. I put on some records and tried to play along with them—songs that had easy bass-lines and, after a few tries, I was able to follow along with them. Voila! I was now a bass-player. OK, I wasn't really but the fact I could hammer out a couple of songs gave me the confidence to pursue it. The bands I played in weren't the best, although Brandon from No Way Records had the crazy idea to do a 7" of a demo by my old band NO SYSTEM but the point was it was fun and more rewarding that mastering a video game.

***

OK, Old Man Quint is done lecturing you now. Let's move on to bands that make music with real, live instruments.

PERMANENT MAKEUP had a pretty good album last year and, while I'm not as enamored with the three songs on their new 7" *Giberring* as the ones on that album, the positive attributes remain. Nervy post-punk with fuzzy, almost jazzbo guitar. "Suggestion" has a sneak-attack lead-in, before the bash kicks in, concluding with a cloud of atonality. And when that piece of shit Henry Kissinger croaks (hopefully sooner than later), the song "Die Kissinger" will be on the radio show playlist, along with MDC's "Henry Kissmyassinger" and SUICIDE FILE's "Kissinger." (New Granada/No Clear, PO Box 360276, Tampa, FL 33673-0276, www.newgranada.com)

Discos MMM have co-released albums by a pair of melodic punk bands, a self-titled one by DECRANEO, from Mallorca and *La Vida Que Todos Envidian* from Mexico's LOS MONJO. Decraneo are urgent and impassioned-sounding from both a musical and vocal perspective, with plenty of presence and punch. Maria sounds like she could be Alice Bag's Spanish cousin (niece?) and the band's music echoes an early LA punk and classic Spanish punk sound mixed together. DECRANEO do everything right and are another reminder of why I still like punk in 2014. DECRANEO respect the roots and keep it fresh-sounding. LOS MONJO also make me think of the classic SoCal sound as well. YOUNG WASTENERS did this thing many years ago and LOS MONJO have been successfully plying it for awhile, themselves. The guitar line for the last song, "Malas Noticias," plucks the lead guitar line from the ADOLESCENTS' "Amoeba." The vocals are a tad off-key, albeit appealingly raspy. The songs are energetic and tuneful, full of bubbling bass lines, subtle drumming and buzzing guitars. (Discos MMM, discosmmm.com)

POWERBLESSINGS operate in a melodic vein, as well, albeit in a different manner. After a good 7" a few years, this Western Mass. band's full-length, *Quick Guide To Heart Attacks*, provides surging punk delivered with plenty of volume and sting. Jon Bartlett's vocals are reminiscent of Vic Bondi from ARTICLES OF FAITH and there's some inspiration drawn from the early DC and early '90s emo-core sound, to an extent. The guitar line on a song like "SSS" sticks in the brain long after it's over. Same for "Creep Frost," a brief blast that's the best song on the album. The lyrics attempt to be poetic and/or oblique, like something you'd read in a high school or college literary publication. I was never much for poetry and a little profundity goes a long way but when it's fused with the ear-grabbing musical contents here, I'm quickly won over. (Manhattan Chemical and Electronic, 111 East 14th St., #519, NY, NY 10003, powerblessings.bandcamp.com)

Next are three recent releases from Bad Hair Life Records. In case you don't know the deal with SECRET PROSTITUTES, they're from Houston but their vocalist Adit sings in Indonesian and his voice has a fast-paced cadence that sounds as though it's at about 38 RPM while the music is at 33 1/3. Their second full-length album *Welcome to Punk... Viva la Evolucion... We Can Do Whatever We Want* brims with short and catchy songs—not overtly poppy but toe-tapping and working themselves into a state of near-delirium, although "Live in Pankow" comes close to pure pop/punk while maintaining the band's stamp. There are also a few songs veering into hardcore territory. You can probably lift the needle for the concluding "Secret Prostitutes Theme," which is a Latin music piss-take but it's a fun ride. And I laugh every time I hear the false start for "Tak Bisa Tahan," which stops and Adit goes "what the *fuck*?," before the song starts again. Snappy and irresistible, as always.

DARFÜR's self-titled 7" shows a band effective at mixing fast Finnish hardcore with some UK-82 inspiration, particularly for the last song, "Fallen on Deaf Ears." And they're a bit of an anomaly, since they sing in English instead of their native tongue. Politically-charged lyrics paired with trebly production and, while there's not really anything new under the sun, it's still a solid, straight-forward attack over the course of these six songs. Tucked inside a heavy-stock, foldout sleeve.

The JAM sang about a private hell many years ago—the lyrics were about the empty life of a middle aged woman. On their first 7", PALACE BEAUTIFUL's lyrics also reveal a private hell of anguished memories, or so it would seem, with a line like *"I never chose to be even born"* on "Being In Nothingness." From a musical standpoint, it's a propulsive but dour tandem of anarchopunk and Riot Grrrl minimalism. While the musicianship is on the rudimentary side, the two more upbeat (relatively speaking) songs that start each side have a certain burn and fire that clicks. (Bad Hair Life, badhairliferecords.blogspot.com)

AK 47 are self-described old-timers from Victoria, BC who have been a band since the late '90s. On their latest album *Garden City* they still sound angry and they still sound pissed. Oh boy are they pissed, especially when it comes to law

enforcement. In fact, some of the songs deal with specific incidents, such as the shooting of an unarmed young man, Oscar Grant, who was gunned down at a public transit station in Oakland (everyone should see the excellent movie *Fruitvale Station,* a dramatic account of the last day of his life). AK47 slam out fast hardcore with the occasional metallic lead, some double-speed moves and chuggy sections (which I could really do without) and the rage seems genuine, especially vocal-wise. (ak47hardcore.blogspot.com)

Another band dishing it out angry and aggressively is NUNHEX, on their *Disruptive Deception* EP. Hammering and blistering thrash/hardcore/mayhem powered by scampering drums and a meat-cleaver twin guitar attack. Relentless, raw and ugly and the vocals are appropriately bellicose. And maybe it's my imagination but the main guitar riff for "Take Control" reminds me BLUE ÖYSTER CULT's "Godzilla." Usual beef—the speed for speed's sake doesn't always work, but it doesn't dominate the proceedings, either. A good and loud pummeling. (Suburban White Trash, PO Box 270594, Fort Collins, CO 80527-0594, suburbanwhitetrashrecords.com)

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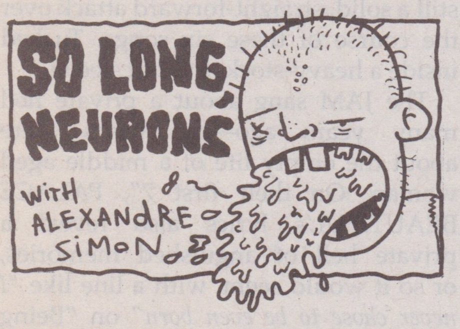


The Saturday I heard Life Stinks, I got drunk and punched a close friend in the face three of four times, after screaming some nonsense in the streets for ages and makin' a fool outta myself. I ain't much of a fighter so when my fist started flying I was probably more puzzled than my opponent, who was cool enough not to punch back. Couple hours earlier, we both were drinkin'n'dancin' in La Luttine (local hangout for aficionados of bad music) in front of a band from Kurdistan, who played what seemed like their country's traditional music. It lasted for a few hours, we drank and cheered and I thought, "hey, Kurdish music's alright, life's alright, life doesn't stink."

At this point I wasn't thinking about Life Stinks, don't think I was thinking at all, nothing deeper than "hell, that guitarist doesn't stink, he plays like most people talk," and by that I mean he played like there was nothing to talk about, nothing special, nothing to think about It was like he could play some crazy-ass solo on that weird-ass looking guitar (which technically wasn't even a "guitar" but a "tanbur") and talk or joke or smoke at the same time, casual as a dog pissin' on shit—very impressive, and sure enough very different from what I'd heard, that same afternoon, on the goddamn Life Stinks album. I gotta say, that record was hard to obtain for me, and by "obtain" I don't even mean I got a hard copy, being I'm too broke to buy records right now. I sure as hell would have mailordered it if the postage rates from the US to Europe were still what they were a couple years back, but nowadays what's a punk gonna do? Wait for a local distro to get the record for less than thirty bucks? Right, except that the vast, vast majority of local "punk" distros aren't interested in the kind of punk Life Stinks is playing, they're only interested in crust and fastcore and melodic punk sung in Spanish.

I'm being partial, alright, if Life Stinks were a French band it'd be different. National distros would stock their record even if it sounded like Swans, mixed with polka, coz over here it's all about friendship, all about who you know, all about the local network. It's good and it's bad, it stinks and it doesn't—I'm just talkin' for the sake of talkin,' but all I wanna say is, no local distro or store is selling shit like Life Stinks so… Life stinks, in that aspect. I tried finding it on some blogs but couldn't. It seemed like it was one of those records—which either means that no bloggers gave a fuck or that the band and label were being cautious of not letting the music be easily downloaded for free by the likes of me. For a few weeks I gave up, I just listened to *Sharp When You're Bummed* and *Cemeteries* on Soundcloud, but the problem was those two songs were so hot I had to get more, so I kept trying, no luck or bad luck, I kept listening to those two hits.

I also listened to a lot of early Butthole Surfers, early AC/DC, Räjäyttäjät, Grazhdanskaya Oborona, Wolf Eyes and tons of Aussie rock—y'know the usual suspects from Bedroom Suck and RIP Society and Cool Death Records. But there was something missing from my life. I started spending bad nights, having recurrent nightmares of mygale spiders and snakes wanting a bite of my face. I'd wake up screaming and try not to freak out, and during the day I ate only junk food and gave up showering. I'd play chess online and stare at the cemetery from my window. The goal was to write all day, every day, but what can I say? I knew what soundtrack I needed and it was nowhere to be found, so fuck, I went on with my stinky life and I can't say it was a piece of cake, but then, a few days ago, I checked the internet and found out that former *MRR* columnist Scott Soriano of SS Records (who released the LP) was announcing that it was now available for download. I clicked on that link as frantically as one can click on a link, and imagine my disappointment when I realized that it wasn't a *free download,* holy shit, was I gonna *pay* for some motherfuckin' mp3s of a record I'd probably end up buying afterwards anyway? In other words, was I gonna pay *twice* for *one* record? I mean, sure it's got a saxophone, those are expensive, but…

Anyway, being the smart-ass I am I managed to get the record for "free" on a site called eMusic, which turned out to be a well-known scam. Of course I asked Google *after* giving 'em my credit card details for a "free trial", and I know, I know, what kind of asshole gives away such details for something that's supposed to be free, but I needed to hear those songs and then I had to call my bank to let them know they shouldn't let "eMusic" take money from my account, but the bank lady just laughed at me.

"You got scammed, man, what can I say, don't you know that life stinks, I'm just the bank lady, not fucking Jesus Christ, I do deposits, not miracles, etc…" and here I was with my Life Stinks mp3s, and when I played them… I thought, hey, maybe this *was* worth the hassle. How many times a year do you hear a record you want to play exclusively for days on end? Two or three times, not more than five? And after listening to all seven jams, after realizing that this shit sounded better than Flipper, that it

was in the same league but with more attitude and more rock and more balls? After realizing that all of the songs were either instant hits (that guy can sing, sure he ain't no James Brown but he's got soul, a beautifully perverted and fucked and gross soul) or Velvet influenced downers à la *Sister Ray*? (I mean, that song *My My My* is exactly this and if you don't hear it you are deaf.)

Anyway, after hearing the seven minutes of *Your Face Is Mess* and its dual guitar/ saxophone solo turning into a dual saxophone solo, how could one want to listen to something else? This is like Albert Ayler jamming with early No Trend, right there, for instance it makes me feel like the first time I heard "For John Coltrane" off Ayler's *Live In Greenwich Village* album—music so hypnotic you wanna crawl into the speakers and curl up inside 'em (I stole that metaphor, for what it's worth). Like half of the records that mattered in the past decade, this one was produced by Mikey Young.

On Sunday night, after spending the whole day curing my hangover, wearing sunglasses in dark streets and trying to make amends to my mate who I had punched for no valid reason, after talking with another friend about how everything seemed to be going down these days, how all the gigs in squats had been looking more and more like excuses for hard drugs fueled nights, after spending such a day, walking from one place to another with my headphones on, always the same seven songs, I thought that this record is to modern downer punk what *Primary Colours* by Eddy Current Suppression Ring is to modern garage—an instant classic. It's one of those records we'll still listen to in years, one of these rare ones we'll always hear like the first time, and what if I'm wrong? I have always been wrong before.

That afternoon, for instance, I told a fellow music enthusiast about that record, and how it had been such a pain finding those mp3s, and how he needed to hear it, and how I had to call my bank and everything, and the guy just looked at me and said, why didn't you get it on Soulseek? Sure enough, on Sunday he emailed me to say he found the record on there in five minutes, which made me feel old, like a grandpa who can't even find a Mediafire link. He also said you're right, the record's great, we should order some copies for La Luttine. When I heard the name of that place it reminded me of everything, of the fight and the alcohol and the band from Kurdistan and that fuckin' record (which is the best thing SS released since that Billy Bao 10") and I thought, "man, sometimes life stinks so much that down becomes up—sometimes things are alright just because otherwise they never are."

we see through you

With imogen binnie

I feel kind of bummed right now. Smash It Dead Fest just happened in Boston and it utterly fucking ruled. It's been like a week and a half and I've only been home for like one day out of that week and a half. I'm feeling pretty beat up and exhausted, and I don't know if I'm going to be able to do it justice. But it was awesome.

It happened on a Friday night, then the following Saturday and Sunday. I got there Friday night in the middle of Peeple Watchin's (peeplewatchin.bandcamp.com) set, which was amazing, obviously. Peeple Watchin' rule and it ruled to get to the show and immediately see a transwoman onstage yelling and slaying on guitar and smiling. How fucking often does that happen? Not often enough, at least in my life.

Almost immediately, Jenna from Hirs (hirs.bandcamp.com) appeared! She showed me a knife she got on the internet. Then my friend, Vaughn, was there and I was so caught up in the spirit of feeling stoked, that I spent most of Crabapple's set trying to find people to start a band with Vaughn. It didn't work. I was like, "Sadie! Vaughn needs people to start a band and you know everybody". Sadie was like, "What kind of band?" I was like, "I dunno, metal, right?" Vaughn nodded and then Sadie was like, "Okay, you should talk to my friend Matt". Then as if summoned by Peppermint Butler's Golden Dawn ritual magic, Matt walked through the door! I was like, "Hey, cool, will you start a band with Vaughn?" He wasn't as stoked as me (when I get stoked, it is pretty hard to get as stoked as me), so the whole thing fell apart. Which was fine, because next up was the last band of the night, Downtown Boys (downtownboys.bandcamp.com), who played one of the most amazing shows I've ever seen. Seriously.

Downtown Boys are a "bi bilingual political sax dance punk party from Providence," and I'd just missed seeing them there like a month ago. I'd heard that they ruled and I heard right. Write in and correct me if I've got my facts wrong, but from what I could tell they had just made friends with a Latino skate crew from New York called Brown 2 Clown, and everybody was hella mutually stoked about each other. There were chants of "Brown 2 Clown" between songs. The Downtown Boys' drummer played without a shirt and a bandana over his face, and at one point, picked up the floor tom and jumped off the stage with it to wail away on it in the middle of the crowd, Joey, the guitar player, was wearing a feather boa. Everybody played hella fast. Sometimes the saxophone players sang into their saxophone microphones. Victoria, the singer, introduced every song in Spanish and English and then just had the whole fucking room in the palm of her hand. Their songs were super fun, but also completely serious. "She's brown. She's smart. She's on trial for murder." And then they busted into a cover of "Kids in America," which was perfect because that song rules and they completely killed it. As far as I can tell, Downtown Boys speak for the kids in America way better than anybody on TV or wherever.

Like I said, I'm bummed. I'm feeling pretty beat up and this column is already two days late. I wish I had better words to do justice to how fucking good the Downtown Boys are and how killer their set was. But just trust me and if you get the chance, go see them.

Anyway, I didn't know where I was sleeping, so I asked Vaughn if I could stay with her and she said sure. Then, I stayed up all damn night talking to her roommate, the famous writer K. Tait Jarboe. The next morning, me and Cristy Road got to have punk festival performance breakfast, reading from

books while everybody drank coffee and tried to wake up. I got to talk to Cristy about when you're like, "Man, this thing I made sucks, I'd better make a new thing" and gush about how much I like her work. Then, we traded books. I'm stoked to read her new one, *Spit and Passion,* when I finally get to go home and lay around and read for half a damn second. Fuck. It ruled to see Cristy read and it sounds like she had a rad time there too. She wrote on her website (croadcore.com) that Smash It Dead "kicked me out of this punk-related rut, heavily due to the isolation that comes from being angry. [It] proved that we are not alone in our anger, and it's the reason we are still here, starting shit, in the first place."

Yeah! Exactly! Suzy X (from Shady Hawkins; shadyhawkins.bandcamp.com and mallgothphase.tumblr.com) showed up and I got to table by her and Cristy while they cracked each other up. Bands started to play and I was kind of like, "Oh shit." I sort of expected this fest to be shitty, because everything is shitty, everywhere, and I don't trust queers and I don't trust punks. (Although I've been realizing that maybe I trust punks more than I trust queers because it's easier to tell who's a shitty punk from far away than it is to tell who's a shitty queer. "Shitty" meaning misogynist, or transmisogynist, or good theory/shitty praxis, or not willing to work on their shit.) I definitely don't trust large groups of people. I was like, "Maybe this fest... actually... isn't shitty? Like, at all?"

I was either talking to Vaughn or Jenna or the woman from the Cherry Icees who was tabling next to me, maybe while Dreamboat was playing or something, when I realized that we have been talking about this shit for a long time, about liberatory spaces. There were clumps of Latino/Latina folks hanging out, stoked to meet each other and hang out. There were clumps of transwomen making friends even though we're all hella prickly and don't trust each other or anyone. People were also stoked about people who weren't in their own identity categories or whatever. People were mingling as hell. And *every band that I saw at Smash It Dead was awesome!* It hit me—this was it. I don't want to say it was perfect. I'm sure some people weren't having a good time there. But it was *good.* It felt like the organizers and the people who came to Smash It Dead had managed to put together a legitimately good space, with legitimately good politics, where people were able to have an awesome time and feel, more or less, safe. It didn't feel like we needed to spend a ton of time dwelling on shit that sucks, if that makes sense. I mean, not to talk shit on having good politics, but we spend a lot of time talking about our politics, parsing them out, and explaining why shit is fucked. And that's important. But at Smash It Dead it felt like stuff was just de facto, put into practice. There were queer people and/or transpeople and/or women and/or people of color in every band. There were bands with transwomen in them that I didn't even know about yet! I don't even know how to talk about how far that shit goes toward making me feel like this is a world I can live in. This was my first Smash It Dead. When we were heading into Boston from Providence, Katrina from Groke (groke.bandcamp.com) said that Smash It Dead was one of the things that made it feel possible to live in New England. Now that I live in New England, I totally get what they meant.

Anyway, hella bands played and they all ruled. I got to meet Ashe from Pyka, a grind/powerviolence trio who rule and whose tapes you should download from pyka.bandcamp.com. We got to talk for a while. There is a winky face emoticon on the lyric sheet of the Pyka tape after the line "exhale bullshit / inhale good shit."

I missed Cristy's band, Homewreckers (thehomewreckers.bandcamp.com), and I missed Shady Hawkins (shadyhawkins.bandcamp.com), for the second time in a row because Groke and Correspondences were playing a basement show in Portland (Portland One: Portland, Maine)! What the fuck. I hate that it has become a tradition for me to miss Shady Hawkins. Julia, from Groke, picked me and Katrina up and we booked it up to Portland, stopping only for Jagermeister and scratch-off lottery tickets at the New Hampshire State Liquor Store. Then, I got to play the first Correspondences show in like a year and a half.

This thing happened where we had a twenty-minute set at Smash It Dead, so we were like, "Well, let's write a twenty-minute song." It's called "Frost Heaves" and it rules. I think it destroys everything we've done before and all I want to do now is write twenty-minute songs where I scream my head off. I watched a YouTube video about screaming, so now I am a good singer. Alex, Geyl, and hella other people came and filled up this basement only a block away from the men's shelter. Groke played first, totally killing it, like always. Then we played a couple of old songs and then "Frost Heaves". Even though I couldn't hear myself singing, it ruled. We, literally, got convinced to do an encore even though we hadn't practiced enough songs to do an encore. Then Alex, Geyl and I got pizza.

The next day was super hectic. Correspondences (correspondences.bandcamp.com) was playing Smash It Dead but herding everyone in Portland took forever so we got into town when we were supposed to start playing. Which meant everybody in the band was stressed out and had to pee while we played. Lee was pretty bummed about it, but I thought we were awesome. Plus, I could totally hear myself singing like a ghost this time, which was cool. Then Ragana played after us!

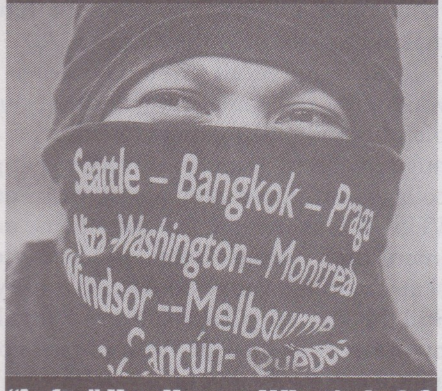
If you have been reading this column, you have heard me talk about Ragana before (ragana.bandcamp.com). They are the best. They have been the primary back-patch on my primary hoodie for two years and I don't have enough awesome things to say about them. If you care about things, like metal, screaming, herbs and women, then they are the band for you. They slayed—obviously. I got to hang out with them a little bit and trade tapes and patches, and share "Your band is the best", "No, your band is the best", with them. I'd never seen them live before! They can totally make those noises live. I even got to talk to Maria about watching YouTube screaming videos.

Lee was stressed out and bummed, so she didn't really hang out inside. I think she mostly spent the day walking her dog around Harvard Square. Ashe from Pyka had this amazing granny dress. I was wearing a velvet dress I got for 50¢ at a thrift store in New Hampshire. We got to see Margy Pepper (margypepper.bandcamp.com) who were on tour from the Pacific Northwest with Ragana, and they slayed too. They are the nicest people.

I am running out of space! I want to tell you about all the bands. And about our show the next night in Providence ("The Wicked Witches of the East Versus the Hella Witches of the West") with Ragana, Margy Pepper, Groke, Pitch and Mother Tongue at Spark City; where Joey from Downtown Boys lives; and where me and Emily rolled up with a jar of Jagermeister and a canister of whipped cream to pass around—for eating not even for whipits. How we got to play by the light of three candles and there are pictures at prunellavulgaris.tumblr.com. In the pictures, Lee just looks like an ominous shadow lurking in the background... but I might start eating into George Tabb's column space. So whatever! I just want you to know that Smash It Dead is the best and I can't wait to go back next year. That Providence punks rule. And I think I kind of believe in punk again.

I mean, it won't last. Tune in next month for two thousand words on why everything everywhere is shitty! For now though nothing is shitty. Smash It Dead ruled so everything rules. Thanks to everyone involved in making it awesome.

Go Team, Smash State!



"Lefty" Hooligan - What's Left?

The logic is inescapable. If US politics are irredeemably corrupt, then to try and reform them is a waste of time, even counter productive. If America is bound and determined to destroy the planet through its imperial activity, then to sustain this country is folly while to hasten its demise is necessity.

Only a fool fights in a burning house.

I've been on a doom-and-gloom jag lately. We're all fucked, everything is going down the porcelain highway, the planet is bound for a slow-motion apocalypse. I keep harping on this pessimistic perspective, which allows for only two real choices; burn it all down, or party hard and die young. Well, this column I will mention a couple of political causes that you can get behind that might make a difference. Winning them won't bring about The Revolution, which I'm convinced isn't happening in my lifetime, but these small victories might make our lives a little bit easier, and counter the rampant nihilism in which I'm currently mired. But first, a sidebar with respect to relevance.

I once did an interview with David McReynolds in the 1980s for *San Diego Newsline*, a tiny independent community newspaper. McReynolds was a pacifist and democratic socialist, a member of the War Resisters League and the Socialist Party USA, of which he was their presidential candidate. He said something during that interview that has stayed with me, with regard to a central fallacy in Marxism. This fallacy holds true for both orthodox, vulgar Marxism (which called itself "scientific socialism") and the plethora of Leninist variations of Marxism (all hail the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought!). As McReynolds explained, in science and the mathematics upon which science is based, 2+2=4. This formula is correct, and science is based upon a number of such correct formulations, truths that cannot be denied without denying reality itself.

If, however, your political ideology is defined as "scientific," or "based on science," or a "science" unto itself, then the formulations of your ideology are supposed to be scientifically correct. There are various and sundry Marxist and Leninist sects which promulgate their "correct political line" as scientific fact, on everything from whether or not to vote for Obama to who to support in the Syrian civil war. In the case of Syria, for instance, these sectoids fight over whether to support Assad whole heartedly, or provisionally, or as "objectively anti-imperialist," debating in turn whether to support the Syrian opposition unreservedly, or reservedly, or just one or another opposition organization or individual. On this one issue alone, there can be a myriad contending positions, and believe me, there are scores of Leftoid sects vying against each other for possession of the correct political line on the Syrian civil war. Problem is, if all these groupuscules possess a political ideology based on science, and if their political pronouncements are all supposed to be scientifically correct, then why the fuck do they all disagree so vehemently with each other on virtually everything?

That's because Marxism is not a science. But rather than argue this further (let alone probe the difference between ideology and theory), I will present a couple of political issues that most of us will consider important, broadly define as correct, and ultimately hope to see triumph in order to make our lives better. Unless, of course, you contend that "the worse things are, the better things are," that the more miserable most of humanity becomes, the faster we all will inevitably rise up in revolution against state and capital. In which case, you can stop reading now.

STOP THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

The Obama Administration is currently negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a free trade treaty on steroids. Encompassing a dozen nations around the Pacific Rim (Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and the United States), with more hoping to join, the TPP is being negotiated behind closed doors. The rigid secrecy extends to members of the US Congress, who aren't privy to most of what's being discussed, and who are prohibited from disclosing the little they do know. Shit has been leaking out about the TPP negotiations however, and it ain't looking good. In addition to all the official government representatives cutting deals in smoke-filled rooms, there are over 600 business representatives from the likes of Chevron, Walmart and Halliburton participating in these trade talks. Similar trade deals in the past have resulted in 3 billion plus dollars in corporate handouts.

There are provisions for media censorship and the banning of buy-local policies. Big Pharma will be allowed to limit access to medicines, and governments will be restricted from regulating food labeling. Workers rights, organizing, and safety will be severely undermined. Foreign companies will be able to legally challenge US

environmental regulation. Increased fracking, and the increased export of all fossil fuels will be promoted. In turn, fossil fuel corporations will be allowed to sue governments that stand in their way. The TPP is not so subtly considered an effort to encircle and contain China internationally. Finally, this massive corporate power grab, neoliberal restructuring of government power, systematic suppression of human and workers rights, and gutting of the climate and environment which the Trans-Pacific Partnership represents is intended to be pushed through the US Congress using Fast Track. Fast Track is a legislative process by which treaties are railroaded through without any opportunity for discussion, debate or amendment by up or down vote only.

We need to stop the TPP by any and all means necessary.

SEE SOMETHING, LEAK SOMETHING

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) was intended to provide clear democratic access and oversight of federal intelligence and security agencies—the CIA, NSA, FBI and DIA specifically—by giving individual citizens a mechanism to request and receive classified documents being held by those agencies. But when MIT PhD candidate Ryan Shapiro made FOIA requests of three of the above agencies for documents regarding allegations that a CIA tip led to the arrest of Nelson Mandela by South Africa's apartheid government in 1962, and Mandela's subsequent internment in prison for 27 years, all three stonewalled Shapiro and denied his FOIA requests on grounds of national security, national defense, and executive privilege.

The Catch 22 Squared around this needs to be emphasized. The CIA, NSA, FBI and DIA are tasked with protecting national security, and thus see threats to national security at every turn and under every rock. The anti-war, anti-apartheid, and radical green movements, everything from the Left to Occupy Wall Street, have all been considered threats to national security and potential sources of domestic terrorism. Nelson Mandela himself was denounced as a Marxist terrorist, and remained on the US terror watch list until 2008. US security and intelligence agencies have been, and continue to be instrumental in the surveillance and subversion of all these progressive movements. For these agencies, the FOIA itself is a threat to national security, and those who request classified material through the FOIA are also considered threats to national security. In the case of the NSA, that agency completely refused to acknowledge the very existence of the documents requested by Shapiro in denying his FOIA application.

Shapiro, who has made over 400 FOIA requests over other issues in the past, decided to draw the line when the CIA, FBI, NSA and DIA used their official position to thwart his FOIA requests regarding Mandela by issuing repeated national security exemptions. In January 2014, Shapiro filed a lawsuit against the CIA, DOD, DOJ and NSA for their non-compliance.

"The failure of the NSA, FBI, DIA, and CIA to comply with my FOIA requests for records on Mandela highlights that FOIA is broken and that this sad reality is just one component among many of the ongoing crisis of secrecy we now face," Shapiro says. The issue for him is that the public needs to keep the government accountable. "It's not surprising those in power wish to keep their actions secret. What's surprising is how readily we tolerate it. We are all familiar with the security-oriented signage instructing us to 'See something, Say something.' In the interest of promoting a fuller conception of national security, I add, 'See something, Leak something.' The viability of our democracy may depend upon it."

It's simple. See something, Leak something.

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I'll mention principled political issues from time to time in future columns, to try and counteract my deep and deepening cynicism and pessimism. It'll be an uphill struggle, all the way.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I'm archiving past columns, and publishing current ones a month delayed on my blog, www.leftyhooligan.wordpress.com. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@me.com.

Today I watched this Grant Hart documentary. I don't know if it could be an actual documentary because basically it's a one and a half hours long footage of Grant Hart speaking by himself about himself and every ten minutes they show ten seconds of Hüsker Dü performing live at different place in different times. The movie itself, and the moment when three old men who accidently bought tickets to this lost their shit and first become loudly irritated and then they left in the entourage of a huge fuss, were quite entertaining. At one point Hart was discussing with himself the privilege to be an artist. He makes collages and while he is saying nowadays everybody is making art when only a few should do it. The camera is nauseatingly shaky by the amateurism of the filmmakers. This monologue follows a process of him making a piece of art he names *$220*.

It made me recall those days when I was doing the same thing, cutting out pictures and pasting them together on a huge piece of paper. I loved making collages on paper and occasionally on VHS. I was twelve so my focus on interesting things was reduced to skateboarding, comic books and nudity. Still this day I dig these subjects with all my heart even though my approach got a little more sophisticated.

But it all made sense. Collages for me not only embodied the easiest form of creating art, putting already existing things together and creating something new out of them, but it perfected my fandom since I was able to include everything I loved on one piece of paper and then I could lost myself in the little details by staring on this glued together pieces.

Gathering all my courage here I wanna disagree with Grant Hart and say everybody should be able to create art and it should be the crowd who sorts out the creations. What I always wanted

to do was to be able to capture that feeling in myself what I'm going through and transform it into whatever that could be consumed by people. But in reality I do it to archive it for myself—to make it available even for myself.

Today is the day Kurt Cobain died. Being a younger brother of a hardcore Nirvana fan I denied not just liking but even to listening to Nirvana. Since it was a thing my brother did and his world didn't really fit into my cube that was filled with smith grinds and people who were shooting laser through their eyes and boobs.

I first heard Nirvana when I already had 80% of Cobain's favorite bands in my head. Then it sounded like Pixies trying to mimic late era Black Flag. But in his honor today I put on to the Faith / Void split LP. And I felt it again. I remembered one night couple years ago, in the same spring period, when I was walking around my block and I listened to this album and felt that something extra. When a feeling inside me is so strong it feels physical in a good way—when I feel like I can grab this thing. Those are the moments I wanna capture and store in a form of thrown together sentences for the future. For me these are already existing things that I place together as a collage. Music is the same. The best bands for me are like the Wu Tang Clan, where everything is great and all together it's the best thing. As ODB yellingly sings in the background the same way I like guitars making damaged noises behind the actual songs. I have realized this when I was drunk on the back of a car that was blasting Minor Threat.

Since then the essence of punk for me is in that disharmony. The flooding noise that connects confused minds. Could be created by anyone but only those succeed who put themselves into it.

Nowadays I try to listen to European, Japanese and Latino bands as much as I can since I do agree with those who say American bands are way too privileged. It's not like one thing is more real than the other, but I need to hear more cause the variety of that realness in everyone is what interests me.

I'm rather interested in countries here more than time periods. Nothing was better back then. I don't think people can grow out of hardcore. It's hardcore that is growing out of old people. The music never changed cause it doesn't need to. If you want new things listen to different genres—don't be a lazy ass chap. If you wanna eat pizza don't go to a Thai place and be surprised. We might get used to it—we are not shocked by it on every occasion but punk is like this. First it sounds like something fun. Funny looking creeps saying "fuck the system," then it grows on you and maybe could force some sense into your brain. Maybe not and you will just be calm with your forever frustration and feel like it's okay to be an outsider.

What is weird in differences between American and European punk is how some Europeans looked on this as a form of art while it was hardly the case in the US. I can accept both ideas and deny artsy-fartsy public masturbation through crappy selfless self-expression, or feel my brain starve when I encounter jockish dude rock attitude with jump around shitty music. I like music that either stands out as a monument or it sticks to million other things as an unavoidable piece of a global puzzle.

I have spent my recent days listening to Gun Outfit, who still are one of the best bands ever. Their music resonates with spring. I got amazed on how amazing early Mekons is with their alienated guitar sound. I blasted through the *Finnish Spunk* compilation and even speed can't hide the melody in those bands—it's hardcore perfection, hardcore played by the beaten. I listened to some disgustingly fun Italian early hardcore bands, like the amazing Stigmathe and Putrid Fever. I was blown away by the then contemporary Neos-worship Canadian band called Jerk Wards. That band's sound is like an already broken thing has been sent through a garlic press. I moshed in my head to *Social Suicide* sickness and the *There is More* craziness; even *Mixed Nuts Don't Crack*: Chalk Circle next to United Mutation and Nuclear Crayon—too good to be real—a compilation which is a perfect gathering of mutant sounds from America, a clean example of that cacophony that my heart beats. I have instant messaged Komplott to play here after I heard their filth soaked music. It's insane that European bands never do full Europe tours. Make a change! KSU, UBR, sick sounds of Eastern Europe just as Radnicka Kontrola. Did you know that every country had amazing bands back then till now? Hardcore is like Chris Thompson bands—it was, is and going to be always good. Have you heard the Circus Lupus demos? It has a different version of "Pulp."

Oh and I have bought a Raincoats LP and the dust collector sleeve has a stamp on it with the name of two members from legendary Hungarian punk band Trottel. They started out as a hardcore/post-hardcore then ended up as post-music, avant-garde, world music band. Still they had couple gigs with Fugazi around Europe and now I have a record that belonged to their private collection.

Everything is like a piece. I bought that record from one of my record dealers. I have two. Both of them are music enthusiasts and the other guy is reachable at any time if I wanna hear any music from any period of time from any country. It's 2 AM—I ask him about old French freak-core and he writes me a list with 100 bands I have never even heard of, stating all of them are essential and to be honest he is fucking right cause 90% of them are fucking amazing. Do yourself a favor and always ask everyone about their local scene. This is how I have learnt about Plastix—amazing frauline-core from Austria. This is how I have learnt about Inferno, a German hardcore band with a crushing sound and weirdly good vocals that are not quite singing.

Most of these bands are similar in the way their anger is so personal it could happen to anyone. Their weirdness makes them misfits even in their countries, but still they are trapped into their reality which could leak into their sounds. But for me it's always the background that is interesting. Right now I'm listening to the Bruce Loose EP and those keyboard songs that are waltzing on that vacuum cleaner sounding sonic guitars. This feels like being lonely at a miserable motel drunk and lonely next to an airport and not being able to sleep—even through closed windows you can hear the planes flying away while you are stuck in a cheap room all alone.

Ah, and don't get me started on Japanese D-core.

Who the fuck thinks hardcore is boring? I mean, it was more shocking in the beginning but because we have built a tolerance against this aggression it still

is fucking cool. Shock rock is a cheap shot and if you only have one joke sooner or later you will become a joke. So while I think punk is so much more than a subculture it has cultural elements and listening to music is one of them. To be young, smart and ugly is more than just culture, but it's too hard to be penned down by anthropologists.

Anyway, yesterday I saw Calvin Johnson live and it was good. I could say it was built on a Jonathan Richman vibe as his whole set felt like a reenactment of Modern Lovers' "Hospital," but his voice is amazing. He is smart, or very bright, and he is a true weirdo. I asked him if he still doesn't like onions and he said no, it's not his thing but I shouldn't hold it against him. There were two moments I got goose bumps: once when he was singing a song that went like, "If the dead can rise up, then so can we. If you don't understand the kids, then let them be", the other was when he was singing about going to the movies alone. Something I used to do a lot. After that song I looked aside and saw my girlfriend smiling back at me and felt happy now I have someone with whom I can go to movies and punk shows.

Johnson's set also proved that Americans, even their finest, are more about the humans than about the ideas. I'm saying this while he is backed up by K Records. Beat Happening itself was a great idea, but his love songs showed that America is great in presenting the anatomy of a person—of a person's feelings. Even in his sharpest moments, when I felt he is so much smarter than everyone in the room, I just felt like he is different than we are. Not in an outsider way. In a different way which is cool I guess.

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"You were in False Prophets?" asks this crazy girl named Lynn over Facebook. That place on the internet that my brother the shrink still doesn't know how to use, although his patients, teenagers, certainly do.

I write her back and tell her I was.

"I saw you at Max's Kanas City and..." she writes back.

I write her back explaining I had joined the band a couple of years after that, but I don't think she cares, by now she's talking about our old lead singer, Stephen, and his creepy long fingernails and Hitler mustache.

She goes on to tell me how hot she thought he was and I tell her that the only thing I wonder about is how that guy wipes his ass with ten inch nails on his right hand. Or jerk-off. But she's not listening. She's long gone into some story about Max's, Johnny Thunders, Iggy Pop, and of course, heroin.

I tell her that never mind that I've never done the stuff, I've never even seen it up close."What?" she asks.

"Heroin" I tell her.

"I love that stuff, I used to party with Johnny Thunders and Iggy at Max's Kansas City in the old days" she explains.

Looney tunes.

I guess this is what happens when the insane ones get old. Or visa versa.

Whatever.

***

It was like the fifth day in a row that it was over a hundred degrees. And of course, the van had no air-conditioning.

Actually, it didn't have a lot of things.

A radio.

Good tires.

A left head-light.

Brakes.

But who the fuck cared. It was punk rock.

And besides, our vehicle was still better than the old school bus that carried the other bands, DOA, and the Cheetah Chrome Motherfuckers (C.C.M.). We, (the False Prophets) somehow always ended up on tour during severe weather. One time we toured the mid-west when it was under minus five degrees for over four days, and we had no heat in the van. But that's another story.

***

I joined the False Prophets in 1985.

They had been together for almost five years at that point, having had a couple of singles out, and some cuts of various compilations. The way I heard that they were looking for a guitar player was that I saw an ad in the Village Voice classified section.

There was also an ad for a band called Artless, who were also looking for a guitar player.

Being that I already had been playing *punk rock* for at least five years, I knew both these bands.

The False Prophets were a local band with a huge left-wing cult following. They sounded a lot like the Dead Kennedys with a real singer. They were kinda funny, and really cool.

Artless was a local band fronted by this guy named Mykel Board, who wrote articles in this magazine called *Maximum Rocknroll*, which I read every month. So I called the numbers in both ads and set up auditions.

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The first audition was for Artless. It was a hot August day, and the guy on the phone told me to meet him at this place called the music building on Thirty-eighth Street and Eighth Avenue.

When I got there I noticed it was a high-class area. There were peepshows on every corner, and hookers hanging out in front of the building. I looked at my watch and noticed I was like a half-hour early.

In those days I was always early. I hated being late. And I hated when people were late. I mean, I used to set my clock ahead, so I'd be early. I still set my clock ahead. But now I know it is set ahead, so I take my time, and am no longer early. Maybe I'll set my clock even more ahead, then I'll start being early again. But I guess eventually I'll know I set my clock ahead, and then give myself some more time.

Anyway, so, since I was early, I figured I'd have a look around. I peeked in some of the sex-shops that called out to me with neon signs flashing "Naked girls, twenty-five cents".

I figured, hey, that's a good price. A bit steep, but what the fuck.

So I go into one of these sex-shops and there are these little booths in the back. I enter the booth, close the door behind me, and put a quarter in. This window rises up, and there, in front of me, is this girl's crotch—if you can call it that. It was scary. I'd never seen anything like it before. There was all this hair between these two large legs that were pressed together. More hair than on the faces of

the lumberjack hipsters in Brooklyn.

And there were these scars.

Oh my god. It seemed as if this woman had been cut in half, then sewn back together.

So this crotch continues to gyrate in front of my face, and then the woman stops pushing her legs together. She spreads them apart.

And then it happened.

Geezus.

Oy revolt.

Out from between her legs pops a penis that had been hidden between her/his thighs. A big one, too.

I ran out of there and on to the street.

Whew. I was kinda in shock from what I had just seen. But then I felt my heart sink down to my bowels, then rise up to my throat. I had forgotten my guitar in "there." I went back in, and this large woman walks up to me with my guitar and asks in a very deep voice if I forgot something. I tell her she is holding my guitar, and can I have it back, please. She gives it to me and laughs as I run out of the place. It wasn't until years later that I entered one of those places again.

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Eight years to be exact.

It was Halloween, and me and My Future Ex-Wife and Chicken John from the band that can not be mentioned, the guys in New Republic, Evan, Scot and Marc from Iron Prostate, Scot's girlfriend Laura, and who ever the fuck else had just got done trick or treating in New Jersey.

We were in Chicken's van and all the way back to the city Chicken keep telling us how horny he was. So we decided that as a token of our appreciation for him, we'd get him some oral sex from a hooker.

Hey, it was his idea. And it was only twenty bucks. Or so we had heard from our pal Unk, who knew about such things.

So we start driving on all these side streets in the city where all the hookers are. And there are hundreds of them!

Wow, I couldn't believe it.

They were in all shapes and colors.

It was amazing.

Some were fully dressed, some were wearing skimpy underwear, and some were even naked. Wow!

So as we are driving past all these girls/guys dressed as girls, Evan and I begin to feel like we are on an episode of *Wild Kingdom* or some *National Geographic* or something.

"Look Evan," I say to him as we pass a girl in a black leather outfit, "there is the wild mistress beast which is very common to this locale." He nods his head as he points out the skinny topples woman with the large gazongas, and explains to me that she is a rare species of Homo-siliconas. I nod my head.

Chicken starts whining in the back of the van that he is really horny now, and wants a woman. So I figure we might as well start getting quotes. Chicken points out a fine breed of hooker, and we drive up to her. Evan rolls down the window and asks how much.

She looks at everyone in the van, and says, "What, you want me to do all of you? That'll be expensive".

Evan explains just one guy, and she says she'll do it for thirty. Evan and I, being the Jews that we are, know we can get a better deal. We drive on as Chicken grabs his groin and whines like a girl. Finally we see another girl that Chicken wants. We drive up to her, and she kinda looks familiar.

As soon as we roll down the window, she says, "Hey, it's George and Chicken John from Letch Patrol." We kinda smile sheepishly then speed away. By this point, Chicken will settle for anything. He is in the back of the van asking the guys from New Republic how much they would charge, and then he starts asking me if he can buy My Future Ex-Wife. I tell him I wouldn't sell her to a donkey show, but maybe to a circus. Looking back, I should have.

Anyway, we spot another girl that looks okay. Well okay is not the word. This girl is beautiful. She has long blonde hair, and legs that go up to her neck.

Must be really rough to shave, though.

Anyway, so we pull up to her, and she smiles and leans into the window of the van. Evan explains that we have a friend who needs some "attention", and how much would it be. She asks who and we tell her Chicken. She steps back from the van and starts yelling, "What? You want me to do a Chicken? Look, I do oral, I do anal, I do half and half, but I certainly don't do no animals!"

She then runs to her pimp. The guy is wearing a large hat with a feather in it, and gold on every joint of his body—straight out of *Starsky and Hutch*. I wonder where Huggy Bear is. Then the pimp starts doing his pimp walk toward the van. You know, that kinda walk where it looks like ya got a back problem so ya keep straightening yourself out. Everyone in the van now starts screaming that we are gonna die, so we speed away.

And Chicken is still unsatisfied.

***

So we figure, okay, we'll go to Show-world.

Show-world was a porn castle on Forty Second Street in New York. We get there so Chicken can relieve himself, and so we can have something to do. The place is huge. Three or four floors of wall-to-wall porn. Except the place is decorated like a circus.

There are video booths, and booths were you can see naked ladies. Suddenly I had a flash back of the last time I was at one of these places, and a large penis came to mind.

Doh.

But we all decided to check out the naked ladies together.

Now, ya gotta see this in your mind. This lady dances naked in the middle of the room. The room is circular, and little windows go up and down all around the room. So we all go into different booths and all can see one another cause we are all in a circle.

So we all start waving to each other, and there is this naked lady dancing around in the middle of the floor, and she is wondering what the hell is going on. We keep waving to each other, and finally the lady gets mad, and decides to block my view with her crotch. I of course run the hell out of there, not wanting any "surprises".

We spend the next half hour of our lives in Show-world looking for Chicken John. He is hidden somewhere behind one of like the three hundred doors to video booths and live shows. My Future Ex-Wife is getting tired, and I really gotta go to the bathroom. We keep knocking on all the closed doors saying, "Chicken? Chicken, are you in there?" All these deep male voices yell that we should leave them alone.

One voice says, "Chicken? How much?"

We finally find Chicken behind the door of a video booth on the second floor. He says he is "almost done", and

to wait. We do. Finally he exits with a smile on his face, and we then start to leave. As soon as we get to the van, we realize that Scot and Laura are missing. We find them having some kind of drunken sex in one of the booths.

So, where was I? Oh yeah.

***

So I go back to the Music Building, and out front is this blonde haired guy who looks like Billy Idol, complete with a crucifix around his neck and everything. Also there is this little guy. I mean little. And he has a black t-shirt on that says "Rat-fucker". He is kinda balding, and wearing all black.

He says, "George?" I tell him yeah, and he explains he is Mykel Board, and this other guy is Joe Shmoe, and we are the two guys today auditioning for Artless. We all shake hands and go up to the room where all the amps and stuff are.

The rest of the band show up, and the other guy goes first.

He plays guitar like a sissy, and does lots of faggy new-wave poses. Mykel thanks him, and then it is my turn. We do a couple of Artless tunes including "How Much Punk Rock Do You Hear In Russia?" and "I Am A Rock".

Mykel thanks me for coming down, and I go home. I couldn't tell if he liked me or not. I mean, right before he shook my hand when I was leaving, he picked his nose. Oh well.

***

The next afternoon I went to audition for the False Prophets.

They had a space of their own on Avenue B and Tenth Street.

The East Village.

The Very East Village.

Out in front of their studio were hookers as well. Also lots of junkies and strange looking people.

I knocked on the door of the False Prophets studio, and a really strange looking guy answered. He had a Hitler mustache, pierced ears, and the longest fucking fingernails I had ever seen. He told me his name was Stephen, and he was the lead singer. As he took me into the room, he introduced me to Steve, the bass player, and Ned, the drummer. Nice enough guys, I figured.

Strange, but nice.

Ned looked cool with his long red hair, but when he played the drums, he would go into this zombie like trance. And Steve, he looked kinda old to be playing punk rock. His hair was all gray, and he kept saying, "ugggh" a lot between words. But they were all really nice. I played some songs with them, and had a good time. They told me they would call me if I made the audition and if I didn't hear from them, to call them in a couple of days.

I wound up calling them.

I got Steve on the phone, and he told me there was someone else they were interested in. He said that maybe they should have two guitar players, and to show up tomorrow, so they could audition both of us together.

I showed up, and there was this *girl* there.

A girl!

They wanted me to play in this punk rock band with a girl!

Now, no offense or anything, but I had just got done being in a band with two *girls* in Florida. These two girls were gay. And they both decided to go out with each other. And they fucked up everything.

It always became us against them.

The them being the two girls, and us, the rest of the band. I figured shit, now they want this girl to be in the band, and if she winds up going out with one of the guys, it will be "us vs. them" again.

I introduced myself to the girl. Her name was Debbie. She was cute. I figured this was gonna be trouble.

We started to play and this girl rocked. She played awesome leads and everything. I played my Johnny Ramone style of punk, and together we sounded awesome. It was really cool. When we got done playing, the guys asked both of us to join the band. I said yeah, and she said yes, but that she would never date anyone in the band. And she didn't.

And the band was great for years.

And she finally did.

And the band died.

***

The next day I called Mykel Board to tell him I joined the False Prophets. He said that was okay, 'cause they didn't want me anyway. They wanted this cute chick named "Debbie".

Go figure.

Anyway, he didn't get either of us.

***

So, where was I, oh yeah, it was the fifth day in a row at over a hundred degrees, and we were on one of our wonderful U.S. tours.

This time we were out with D.O.A. and C.C.M. Both great bands. Both totally nuts.

D.O.A. liked to drink beer.

Um, that is putting it very mildly.

D.O.A. existed to drink beer. These guys drank more beer than anyone I had ever seen. We played this club in Kentucky with them and each guy almost put away a whole case.

Wow.

And C.C.M....

What can I say about a bunch of guys from Italy who could hardly speak English, who had a lead singer whose stomach looked like an Atlas road map, and who, along with his girlfriend, Pigmy, had gotten the worst case of body lice I had ever seen?

Anyway, it is really fucking hot, and me and our roadie at the time, Marc, who later joined Letch Patrol, Iron Prostate, and Furious George are over heating.

The school bus with the other bands in front of us pulls over to the side of the highway.

The driver, Gary, gets out and goes and lies down in the middle of the field. I ask him what he is doing, and he says "power napping." He then falls right asleep and wakes up totally refreshed five minutes later.

Punk Rock.

Meanwhile, Marc and I are feeling sicker by the second. We had played a show in Rhode Island the night before, and both a bit hung over. Also, we were kinda weirded out from the girls we had met.

One was named Betsy, the other, I can't remember her name.

Maybe Marc does.

We met them at the show at AS 221, the coffee house/club we had played at. They took us home to their house were we, of course tried to sleep with them. I got further along than Marc, who spent the whole night begging the girl just to let him sleep in the same bed as her.

I mean, she was walking around naked, kept touching him, then told him she liked him, then made him sleep on the floor.

Meanwhile I was having fun with Betsy, not knowing she was the promoter's girlfriend. We were lucky to leave the state in one piece. For some reason, Marc and I dubbed it the "Eraser Head State."

So after Gary wakes up, he gets back in the bus and begins the rest of the drive to Dayton, Ohio.

Ya wanna talk about shitholes?

Forget what I said about Florida.

Florida is Disneyland compared to Dayton.

We get there and it is only One hundred and seven degrees. We get to the house were we are staying. Of course there is only one kind of water running.

Hot.

And I need to take a shower.

Bad.

Well, actually, I always need to take a shower.

I love the shower.

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I take like four or five of them a day. Ya can never feel too clean.

And here we are in Dayton. With no cold water. So I practically burn my skin off, but get clean. And now I feel really nauseous.

Marc and I decide we are hungry, and ask where the nearest place to eat is. The hippie we are staying with says there is a McDonalds two blocks away.

We're there, dude.

We enter the place, and we are like the only punks there. Actually, we are the only people there.

Except for the four people behind the counter. Oh yeah.

Of course there is no air conditioning in the place.

Anyway, they have these big signs for something called "McPizza." We had never seen something like this, and each decide to get one. I bite into mine, and there is all this brown stuff inside. And it tastes terrible. Marc bites into his, and the same thing is inside. He then marches up to the counter and tells the girl, "This isn't McPizza, this is McShit."

We both left, pissed and hungry.

We see a sign for downtown Dayton, and it said one and a half miles. We figured, what the fuck, it was now only a hundred and ten, at least according the to lit up bank sign, and we had nothing better to do, then to go find food.

And air conditioning.

So we walk and walk, sweating like the Reverend Al Sharpton after a spin class.

We finally reach downtown. We get to the corner of First Street and First Avenue, and low and behold, we see a Wendy's. I figure a salad bar would do me good. Light and cold. Marc wants a Frosty.

We enter the place and it is freezing. It feels great. I eat like five plates full of salad, and Marc has three large Frosties. Chocolate. I go into their bathroom and take a shower in their sink. By the time I'm done, the floor is under water. But no matter. We feel great. We feel as though we can make it back to the house with the hippie in it with no problem.

We step outside. It is so hot that our bodies go into some sort of shock.

Marc kneels down, and throws up all three Frosties.

All these people are walking by, and think nothing of it. I can't believe it. This guy just pukes all this brown stuff, and no one even blinks an eye. So I start yelling, "Hey, look, this guy just threw up, gross!" But no one cares. Then I start to feel sick. I tell Marc there is no way I can walk back in this heat to that house.

We decide we will get a cab, except, we remember we spent all our money, and the rest our dough is with the rest of the band.

Shit.

So then Marc gets this idea. He starts yelling that he'll eat his own vomit for a buck.

People just look at him funny.

I run inside Wendy's and get a piece of paper. I write on it with my graffiti-stick, "See a Man eat his own puke, $1 dollar!" I hold it up to people walking by. No one cares.

Quite a place, this Dayton, Ohio.

Finally we give up on the idea of a cab, and start to walk back. I tell Marc I feel sick, and he dares me to throw up on the church steps on the next block.

I do.

Punk Rock.

We make it back to the house, and do the punk thing. Use my mom's credit card, and get a hotel room.

No one in the False Prophets wants to help pay for it, so it is me and Marc.

But then Sid, the singer from C.C.M., and his girlfriend, Pigmy, say they'll split it with us. We tell them okay, and we all take one room.

Then Sid and Pigmy cover themselves with this lice killing oil and stink up the place for the whole night. They both sit around naked and Marc and I can't help but laugh. Finally they wash themselves off, and we all get some sleep.

The next morning we wake up and go outside. The heat wave had ended. It was only ninety-nine degrees.

Take my life, please.

Endnotes:

1. *Savage Sagas From The Meatmen* is the title of the new Meatmen album. First one in almost ninteen years. Get it. Shecky and Sex Mart are back as well as a great tune called "The Dwarves Are The 2nd Greatest Band In The World". Just guess who they think number one is? Also, you can't miss "KKK," a little ditty about Ann Coulter's Kunt. Oh, and "Rock n' Roll Enema." Yes, Tesco and Company are back and boy have we missed him and his "Men O' Meat." Oh, and don't miss "The Ballad Of Stinky Penis," which is a song about Stephan from The False Prophets, if I'm not mistaken!
2. My pal, Clint, from Aggronautix and MVD, sent me a new live D.O.A. DVD and CD called *To Hell N' Back* that is amazing. I'm really sorry to report that last week, Dave Gregg, the long time and original guitarist of the band passed away. He was like the nicest guy, and like I said in the story about him, boy, could he put away the beer. And had such a little body, too! I guess he just worked it off jumping all over the place!
3. I got a new book of art by Mitch O'Connell called *Mitch O'Connell: The World's Best Artist*, and who am I to argue? This book fuckin' rocks! Mitch does all sorts of art, and you've seen lots of it in semi-recent punk rock fliers for concerts and stuff. Put out by Punk Publisher, Last Gasp of San Francisco—this baby is big and in full bright technocolor. I mean, it looks *awesome!* Lots of cartoons of naked ladies as well as kick-ass retro style comic art and even cool art of the Supersuckers and the Ramones. Actually, lots of Ramones! You will recognize his Lollapaloosa posters and album covers, but there is so much more. Seriously, check him out on the web at mitchoconnell.com, or mitchoconnell.blogspot.com. You've never seen something as cool as this. And if you have, then it *was* by Mitch.

Ten zillion out of Ten zillion stars!

4. Speaking of books, you can buy mine for really cheap used on Amazon. I just purchased ten of my own books for a penny each. Of course, there was $3.99 shipping, but it was well worth it. I couldn't get them any cheaper! Oh, my books are *Playing Right Field: A Jew Grows in Greenwich* and Surfing *Armegeddon: Facists, Fishnets and Body Fluids in Florida*. If you like my columns, you'll love my books. Everyone tells me they can't put the books down and that they are easy to read. And fast. And that's how I wrote them. I wrote these books like books *i would want to read*! That means no big long stupid words I don't understand, or paragraph after paragraph of descriptions of flowers and trees and shit. Just lots of funny jokes, alcohol, and sex. Oh, and a few dead animals just for the hell of it! Really, if you buy them *really cheap*, and you don't like them, I'll give you your money back (minus the postage, of course!") But you'll love them. Also, I made sure to put plenty in local libraries so if you really don't want to pay the few cents, you can get it to read for free. For me, it ain't about the money, it really is about The Punk Rock, and how good it can make any of us feel! Have a great month!

This is the second half of this article, continued from last month. In summary, the first half spoke opened with my introduction to the RAMONES *The Chinese Wall* tape, then went on to talk about punk music on the radio today. It ended with an interview with Tim Scott, who does *Teenage Hate* radio show on Triple R, a Melbourne community radio station.

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For popular community radios of listening choice, Melbourne has both Triple R as mentioned previously, and PBS. The only show I'm familiar with on PBS is Peter Bramley's *Club it to Death. I* first met Peter at probably one of the shittest pubs in Melbourne, both of us having drinks before we went to our respective shows for the night. I was familiar with his work already, doing an obscure-ish pop label called Vacant Valley. *Club it to Death* displays Australian and New Zealand based bands and solo artists; a varied array of styles and sounds, which loosely fall under a rock or pop field. You will hear current and recent releases, as well as past favourites and obscurities. Presenting those who are unique, bold, fearless, reckless, un-chic, insulated, fun, vile, challenging, resilient, sour, weird, romantic, and so on.

Why *Club it to Death*?

The program name is a slight nod to the title of Alice Cooper's third LP, but the primary reference is from a song by Melbourne band TISM, titled *Let's Club it to Death*. The chorus states, "Give me your seal of approval"—regardless of their intended message in this instance, they are a band that seemingly required no consent or validation from anyone. That's part of my approach to hosting a radio show, without any conceit whatsoever. I present what I alone enjoy, and hopefully listeners will discover and enjoy too. As a matter of fact, "Jab it to Death" was a spray tag, and name of a song by Adelaide/ Melbourne band JAB.

You just started a new season of Club It To Death but have done the show previous seasons, right?

Yes, the first edition of *Club it to Death* was on air Wednesday, March 5th. Since July 2013, I have done around ten or so fill-in's for shows like *Makeshift Swahili, Sunglasses After Dark, Junkyard* and *Bangin' Radio*.

Now it's fortnightly, has it been a struggle getting a slot and keeping the show going?

I haven't really tried to push for a slot as such. I simply put my hand up for fill-ins, and on the strength of those, was offered a regular fortnightly graveyard slot. In terms of keeping the show going? Well, there is always going to be plenty of quality music (past, present and future) from Australia and New Zealand. Ultimately, public interest determines the "success" of community radio.

What motivations do you have to do a radio show?

The potential of exposing listeners to "new" and interesting sounds.

How you choose your shows, the theme or bands/songs to play?

Each edition of *Club it to Death* is made up of current/recent releases, as well as past favorites and obscurities. Sometimes, there will be a spotlight on a certain record label or artist. The show embraces a variety of "styles"—delicate pop, proto or post punk, general bizarreness, noise, grindcore, and so on. Therefore, the natural flow of each show is important, given the wide scope of content presented.

Your focus is on Australian and New Zealand music, why not showcase music further abroad?

There are plenty of other radio shows which take care of that. I love music from everywhere, yet I find New Zealand particularly fascinating, and perhaps there's some Aussie pride too. Why not give full attention towards these two countries?

Do you think the Internet has changed how people view alternative radio?

Potentially yes. It partly has to do with attention span, and lack thereof. Music is progressively easier to seek out and obtain for yourself, via the good ol' internet—which is a great thing. Consequently though, some could feel radio may not be as necessary as before—why watch *Australia's Funniest Home Videos* when there is YouTube? Though I like to think that that analogy doesn't apply to independent radio "versus" the internet. They can/do operate together extremely well. Plus, people still enjoy being presented with a 'mix'.

What radio shows do you listen to?

Makeshift Swahili (R.I.P), *Ear of the Behearer, Sunglasses After Dark, Mixing Up the Medicine*, all on PBS. *Let Your Freak Flag Fly*, with Michael Smith, on 3CR. *Return to Oz*, on Edge Radio in Hobart. *Underground Australiana, Bastard Theatre* and *Tips for Teens*, via 4ZZZ in Brisbane. *O' Tomorrow* and *Teenage Hate* programs via RRR, also.

How people can get in contact with you to send you music?

Club It To Death. P.O. Box 261, East Brunswick, Victoria, 2057.

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Thanks Peter for another local point of view. But in terms of listening to radio beyond your local stations, beyond being interstate or international, has

only become possible with the option of online streaming. Radio listened to on a radio is limited to the city it resides in, but with the internet can be streamed from anywhere. This is convenient seeing as how good alternative music on the radio is in short supply in each city, but online streaming provides opportunity for now a much larger variety. Australia relies solely on the few community radio stations we have (as college radio is practically non-existent). As mentioned by Tim Scott, another stellar show belongs to Matt Kennedy's *Underground Australiana* on 4ZZZ (Triple Z) far up north from Melbourne in Brisbane, QLD. As well as the radio show, Matt is also the main guy behind KITCHEN'S FLOOR and Eternal Soundcheck Record label / distro / recordings.

How long have you been doing *Underground Australiana*?

Matt Kennedy: I started *Underground Australiana* in February 2013, so for a little over a year now. Before that I had been doing a similar show called *Eternal Soundcheck* which began in June 2012. It was a late night show that aired midnights until 2am, and most of the time I also did the graveyard shift after it—which went until 6am. Doing those long graveyard shifts really helps improve radio skills as you have more than enough time to get to know the technology and experiment to find out what works and what doesn't.

What drives you/motivations do you have to do a radio show?

It's a war of the minds thing. I can't stand or accept comfortable mediocrity in music, which is the majority of what is promoted in various forms of media and that should not be the case in this enlightened information age. There are too many bands and their audiences that fall into that category because people aren't aware of anything better or just lack the imagination to bother looking. That is especially true in Brisbane where the city has a habit of embracing generic mediocrity while overlooking or even ignoring the amazing groundbreaking stuff this city creates. My radio show is basically propaganda to educate and fuck with people's heads to expand their minds. Dude.

Some memorable bands or people you've had in the studio to talk? Any stories worth sharing?

I don't do too many interviews but I did a shambolic telephone interview with Nihilistic Orbs in 2012 where I was expecting to just be speaking with Shaun about the label but it turned out he had gathered half of the Nihilistic Orbs roster in front of a speakerphone—members of NUN, REPAIRS, CHOME DOME etc. I hadn't prepared any questions and everyone was talking over each other and it was hard to make sense of anything because everyone was drunk, including me. It broke every rule of good interviewing and it was amazing, I'm totally proud of that.

How you choose your shows, the theme or bands/songs to play?

I don't limit the show to any one genre, I try to be as varied as possible. I'll play punk rock to electronic pop to experimental noise to hardcore to ambient drone to bedroom 4-track stuff or whatever. I usually just play something because I like it and think it is interesting and honest. I do my own research to track down new music each week—which mostly just involves me geeking out on my computer trawling through Bandcamp and Soundcloud and other sonic channels for hours.

How do you think radio is relevant for underground music usually spread by word of mouth?

The whole function of community radio is to provide an outlet for this kind of music. It is free media, free from censorship and commercial advertising. It is only as good as the volunteers that run it and the subscribers who pay for it and the people who listen and support it. It's a very grass roots system where anyone can be a part of it and have an influence. So it's only as relevant as the people who involve themselves with it or listen to it make it. Or something.

Do you listen to the radio on an actual radio or online stream? Do you think the internet has changed how people view alternative radio?

I'll listen to 4ZZZ on an actual radio because I can due to being a resident of Brisbane but online streams are awesome if I want to listen to RRR or WFMU, or whatever, the ability to do that has definitely improved how people can listen to the radio. Until recently smaller independent radio stations could only broadcast to a specific area around their transmitter, now thanks to the internet anyone in the world can listen to their station. Technology is good etc.

What specific things do you think makes it successful (i.e. variety etc)?

Integrity. Only playing music I believe in and not caring about outside pressure to play what is currently popular or whatever. No requests!!

What radio shows do you listen to? Any radio show props/shout outs?

I am a big fan of a low key show on San Diego college radio station KSDT called Stoned Out Of My Mind (stoned-out-of-my-mind.blogspot.com). The guy always plays awesome stuff, mostly current or vintage USA outsider rock and he also has a weird obsession with current Australian stuff—I never miss an episode. I'm a big fan of Pat O'Brien's show *O'Tomorrow* on PBS and Tim Scott's *Teenage Hate* program on RRR. 4ZZZ has an excellent late night electronica / noise program called *Elevated Utopian Horizons*, where a lot of the noise heard is actually created live during the broadcast by Ben the presenter, I think it is pretty special.

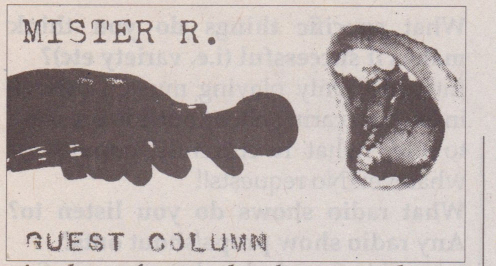
How people can get in contact with you to send you music?

Through the *Underground Australiana* facebook page I reckon.

"People are bored. They're looking out for something new and exciting and music's been dead for a long time but now something's starting to happen….in the 60's people were open to listening to new things but now it's about the money and top 40 sorta stuff so they've changed over and now progressive radios dying. It's hurting us it's hurting everybody." –Joey Ramone (The Ramones On EAUGTV,1978)

Like you buy a record, go to a show or read a zine—listen to the radio. It's free and you'll find out about a ton of new music that isn't shit (if you're listening to the right station) and these days it's more accessible than ever. Get involved yourself, by subscribing or volunteering, or doing a show of your own. The people that do the shows are passionate about music, often involved in a bunch of other similar projects and most importantly, they're supporting your band, your shows and your scene.

…Do you remember lying in bed
With your covers pulled up over your head?
Radio playin' so no one can see
We need change, we need it fast
Before rock's just part of the past
'Cause lately it all sounds the same to me
—The Ramones, "Do You Remember Rock 'N' Roll Radio"



A column for people who wanna know the accepted spelling of the word mixtape.

I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, so we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though.*

Dear Mr. R—
I got a question for ya: I recently stopped seeing someone. Everything seems to be pretty cool between us, but the thing is, she lives at a show house. I feel like it might be awkward to go to shows at her house and get drunk and dumb and whatnot. Should I just skip the shows? Am I overreacting?
Thanks,
—Actually Concerned About Boundaries

I'm not really sure what you mean when you say things are "pretty cool" between you, cause *pretty cool* seems like pretty generous phrasing when you're not sure you'd be able to casually hang out at a show at her house. I guess either way it really all depends on why y'all actually broke up, and how much you care about the friendship mending process and outcome, right? Which I hope you do, at least for the sake of a scene that would also like to not be made to feel awkward at shows. *So* if you were the breaker-upper and you did something like cheat on this person, or diss on their love of Billy Joel all the time, or in any other way break a heart, you might wanna stay away from the shows. Sometimes people act as though things are pretty good, but, when faced with someone at their house getting drunk and dumb, it will still create bitterness/complications, and prolonged bullshit. People really do need space. No kidding. It does go the other way though too. If you're acting like everything is fine between you but you're actually dying inside at shows or waiting to run into her and cry on her shoulder, punch her new boyfriend, tell all of your mutual friends how she's a heartbreaker, love taker, etc., don't go to the shows. It's uncomfortable to everyone, but also is not gonna help you in any way get into your cool new single lifestyle. In summation, don't go to the shows unless you're willing to be chill and nondestructive—just run into each other at other people's shows and have that happen by accident. Maybe join a crafting circle and spend an occasional Saturday night re-studding your punk vest with the people you love.

Dear Mr. R—
Yo, is punx really hippies? Was Gism right? Cause like, punks since the dawn of time—myself and my friends included—make fun of hippies constantly and are defensive when hit with the accusation that we in fact are hippies. But what does it mean that like everyone I know is in herb school and the night after getting fucked up on MDMA and drinking PBR on painkillers that we wake up and take a shower with Dr. Bronner's and drink coconut water (nature's Gatorade) and insist on free bleeding because tampons are fucked up? Are we hippies?

What is punk to some people obviously is going to be not punk to other people, so If you are trying to April Fool me into explaining what punk actually is, well, I'm not even gonna fall for it.T hat kind of embarrassment needs to saved for some other time. But taking this as a real question, I can totally see why you'd be confused! Lets set the subculture comparisons aside. I think that what we're doing is choosing the poisons that suit us. So many things contain chemicals that are harmful to humans like soaps, food, clothes, beer, drugs, furniture, and on and on, cosmetics contain lead, polystyrene to-go containers contain a neurotoxin that will leach into food and beverages, who even knows what the fuck *fragrance* is and that's in *everything*. Basically you can't avoid ingesting all sorts of horrible things, so I think it's necessary to pick and choose which one's are the most worth it to you. Like, if it is important for you to be able to do MDMA and drink PBR, then you should probably be choosing to eat all of that organic produce and using the weird crystal deodorant on your off days (don't forget to have off days). I would assume that being sober would free you up to eat way more Cheetos, as well as give you the chance to wear those corner store mittens they sell that smell like they were peeled off a dead body post embalming. I would love to wear those things someday, but I'm making due with putting Emergen-C in my High Life for now. You'll always see people that have been living tough on their malt liquor and fast food for years that are now having health problems as adults. Some of it is definitely inevitable aging stuff, but a lot of it is preventable by not worrying whether or not someone is going to compare you to a hippie if you decide to eat a quinoa something or other instead of another Papa John's dumpster pizza for dinner. This is just an opinion column though. Maybe I should add a disclaimer down here that says "taking painkillers and then eating an organic grapefruit will not extend your life… or cause any less damage to your body... or make any difference at all, probably."

To Mr. Rocknroll—
I recently bought eight songs on a popular music website for $1.29 each. I was interested to know, how much of the money went to paying royalties since the album was gold certified?
Sincerely,
—Jason Chadbourne 3/22/1972

Dear Jason, I'm not much of a researcher, but have you tried a "RIAA royalties" search on wikipedia? Wikipedia-ing is a thing punks do, right? Was it a band that deserved the money?

It seems like you guys are really questioning your love lives right now, huh? Wanna fit in with your friends, but don't feel responsible enough for dog ownership? Send me some more questions. I'm here to help. askmrr@mail.com.

Instruments 101

A friend recently asked me this simple question: *I have this amplifier; it's made out of a head, and a cabinet. How should I*

connect them together? Well, my friend, I wish the answer was easy, but it's not. I have seen many talented musicians being totally confused when they had to face this subject.

Let's basically start with the obvious. Do not use an instrument cable to connect a head to the cabinet, like, never ever. Instrument cables are designed to let flow a very small current from your guitar to your head's input. This signal is then amplified to lethal voltages by your head, and then, goes to the speakers loaded inside the cabinet. Thus, you have to use a speaker cable.

A speaker cable is nothing more than a standard electrical cable with two jacks soldered to it. It is made to hold high-powered current. You can usually recognize them because they are heavier, and the cable section is bigger than most instruments cables. Please, if you can't figure out the difference between an instrument cable and a speaker cable, ask someone that can help you. The reason is, you can damage and destroy both your head and your speakers, using the wrong cable. I assume you don't want to do that, right?

So, now that the cable thing is covered, let's talk about two things you should know. It's all about physics, and it's very simple. Amplifiers, only produce current. Speakers are turning this current into sound. The current provided by the head has two characteristics: power, and resistance. Power is written in *watts*, and you probably know how many watts your head can deliver when your purchase it, right? Resistance is something else. It's written in *ohms*, and it's basically the way the current flows into the cable to the speakers.

You only have to remember two things, and the first is about power:

The power produced by your head, should never be above the power rated on the cabinet. For example, if you have a 50 watts head, you can plug it into a 50 watts cabinet or above (it is recommended to use above, for safety). Never plug your 50 watts head into a less than 50 watts cabinet, or you will damage and destroy your speakers loaded inside the cabinet. Please, never do that.

In short: Watts of the cabinet > Watts from the head. Always!

The second thing is about resistance:

Let's call this resistance the impedance. The impedance from your head, measured in ohms, should always be equal, or at least lower, than the impedance of your cabinet. For optimum results, they should be the same. But if you have no other choice, just be sure that the impedance from you head is under the impedance accepted by the cabinet, or you will damaged and destroy both your head and your speakers. Impedance is easy to figure out. You usually have a selector on the head allowing you to choose 4, 8 or 16 ohms to send from the head to the cabinet. The impedance accepted by the cabinet is usually written on it. Ask someone that might know if you're not sure.

In short: Ohms from the cabinet = (or >) Ohms from the head. Always!

Now that we are safe with the speaker cable and the basic knowledge of power and impedance, we can talk about the heads. There are basically two types of heads: solid states and tubes.

Let's start with solid states, which are the easiest to deal with. Their impedance is usually the lowest possible, like 4 ohms, and it is usually fixed. You can't choose it with a selector. You can plug them pretty much the way you want in terms of impedance because they will adapt to the cabinet. Just make sure the power of your head is not above the acceptable power of the cabinet. The only thing you need to know is that if you plug your 4 ohms solid state head into an 8 ohms cabinet, the power will be divided by half, and if it's a 16 ohms cabinet, it will be divided by four. Your 100 watts head will be used as a 50 or 25 watts amp. Solid states heads are strong and pretty much impossible to destroy; they are mostly used by bass players, who usually need high power amplifiers—but that is another subject I might cover later. I guess you might understand now, why Greg Ginn of Black Flag loved these amps so much.

Now, we are entering the complex world of tube amplifiers. They are awesome, but demanding. You have to be very careful with them, because they can break easily. Tubes are consumer goods, and could be compared to a light bulb. Once they've decided to go off and die, you have to throw them away and replace them (but don't do that by yourself, if you don't have the basic knowledge to do it). Please, always respect the power and impedance rules more than with the solid states amps. Never, ever, turn your head on without plugging it into a cabinet with a speaker cable. *Never do that!* They totally hate that, because the output transformer is considering it like you're giving him not 8 or 16 ohms, but infinity of ohms. Trust me; your head won't like it. There's a lot more to say about tube amplifiers, but I'll talk about that topic later. Just make sure that you connect them the proper way to the cabinet, and you'll be fine for now.

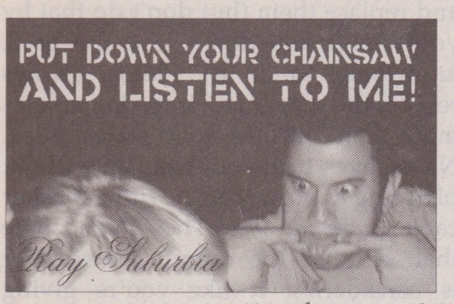
To conclude this column, let's just clarify a couple things:

First, the power of a speaker cabinet is *not* the power it can produce. It is only the power it can accept without breaking and being destroyed. If you want to judge the loudness of a speaker, you have to check its "sensitivity". Once again there are a lot of things to say about this topic, so I might write about that in another column.

Then, I want you to keep in mind that a 100 watts amplifier, because of the way the human ear works, is only 3 decibels louder than a 50 watt one. So don't go on a loudness war—you will only damage your ears. It is more important to cut through the mix of other instruments, using your equalization the proper way, than to turn the volume louder. If you're playing guitar, you should try to experiment with the middle potentiometer, rather than the gain or master volume.

In the end, if you have a combo amplifier, it is nothing else than a head and a cabinet merged together. But you don't have to mind about how you should plug your head to the cabinet anymore. Don't think that it is an easier solution, because combos do imply a couple of troubles too. Once again this is another subject I might write about later.

I'm pretty sure you won't destroy a thing now, so please keep these simple rules about impedance and power in mind, and all should be well. Until we read again, start a band and have fun with your gear. Hate mail or further explanations goes to: instrumentsoneohone@gmail.com



"You hate people!"
"But I love gatherings. Isn't it ironic?"
—*Clerks* (1994)

I've been feeling really anxious and extra stressed out lately. I normally have pretty bad insomnia, but it's been rather out of control this past month. It's weird, 'cause I've gotten a lot of things sorted out that were stressing me out pretty badly—finally found a paying job, gave my car away to a friend so I don't have to worry about it, even started playing music again. Yeah, I had to go to court for some stupid ticket that I still owe, but now that I'm working it's not that big of a stress. Plus, nothing says you're really in your new home like being processed through the local system.

The job I got is one I'm pretty happy with, actually. It's a kitchen job, nothing fancy. It's a small business where I work side-by-side with the owner and the management. They're not punks, but they're definitely down. The only downside is that it's all the way in North Oakland, so I have to commute about an hour each way by bike and train to Berkeley to get there. But honestly, I don't really mind it. I like having time by myself to read or just zone out and not worry about anything besides where the nearest corner store that takes food stamps is.

But getting this job and having to file into a tube shot underneath the Bay a couple times a day made it rather clear what the source of my anxiety and stress has been.

People.

There are so many people everywhere.

And I'm just not used to it.

I haven't lived in a city in a rather long time. Carbondale, IL may call itself a city—and it may be a correct term technically—but there is absolutely nothing modern or urban about it. With a population hovering around 20,000, and a national forest fifteen minutes away by car, there's plenty of room to go around there. The population may double when the university is in session, but still, that's not really a whole lot. The sheer amount of people I now encounter, or have to deal with, any time I leave my house is completely insane when compared to the past few years of my life.

The amount of idle chatter, energy and movement in the Bay has been making me so anxious without even realizing it. It's relentless. The first month I was here I went to the park where those stupid houses from the *Full House* opening sequence are by myself and ate some food—a little personal picnic. I didn't really enjoy it. I couldn't help but constantly look around and think, "This is a fucking park?!" It's less than half a square mile. I was used to parks having lakes and caves and places called "Panther's Den," "Devil's Kitchen," "Fat Man's Squeeze," and "Garden of the Gods." I couldn't imagine why so many people would be so excited to lay out on a clump off grass surrounded by concrete while assholes took pictures of some houses they saw on the TV once. But I've been out here for a little over five months now—never once leaving the urban sprawl of the Bay. Never really being more than 100, 200 feet from another person.

Now I get it.

Parks rule.

The other day I was biking through Golden Gate to return a movie to the video store when I realized that the park at night was the most isolated I've felt since I've moved here. No looming buildings, no traffic to weave through. No one bumping into to me, talking to me, talking around me. If it wasn't for the occasional sirens, I wouldn't have felt like I was living in a city at all.

Even biking around the city at night, when the streets are dead, isn't enough. It's a different kind of quiet. Cities at night give me this feeling of an ominous, pregnant pause—something is *bound* to happen. Whether it happens to you, or even near you, is irrelevant. *Something is going to happen.* There's a tense solace to that, but I very much miss being able to go to the middle of nowhere knowing that there probably isn't anyone, in any direction, for miles. Golden Gate Park kind of gives me that—or at least a large enough illusion (or small enough dose) of it to stave off my isolation DTs.

It's not like I haven't lived in a city before. I grew up outside of Chicago, spending plenty of time visiting the entire half of my family that lived in the city proper. I commuted to school there every day for a year 'til I finally bit and moved to the north side. Lived there for a year, but then moved to Carbondale for three years. After that I spent a few years in Milwaukee—definitely not the bustling, cosmopolitan type of city that San Francisco or Chicago are. In fact, the last house I lived in there was named Nowhere Central. There were about eight inhabited residential houses within a four-block radius. At night, it felt like there was absolutely *no one* around. That neighborhood was an old, mostly abandoned, highway-separated neighborhood in the shadow of the (then) completely abandoned, decrepit and moldering old Pabst Brewery—the furniture district. And for most of the day it was empty—not the scary, "oh no, what if no one is around to help if someone attacks me" empty, the "I'm not worried, 'cause if there was anyone around here I'd see them coming from half a mile away" kind of empty. If it wasn't for the crappy house, and even crappier slumlord that owned it (and the fact that it was a food desert), I would have loved living there. From there I moved back to Carbondale for the next five years to go run around the woods when not in sweaty, dank basements with loud amplifiers. Back to being a short drive away from total isolation.

Man, thinking about it, white flight was kinda all right, huh?

Anyway, so because of this new job and it's extra long commute time I've also been having to spend more dedicated time in getting my *MRR* work done. Gone are the long days in which to do this and that and slowly piece everything together. Yesterday I had the day off, so I sat in front the computer for about twelve hours and plowed through a bunch of stuff. I've had the day off today so I've pretty much done the same thing. The anxiety of the city has pushed its way into the anxiety of my house. God helps us all.

Now, there's a super expensive yuppie grocery store that opened up around the corner from the *MRR* compound a little over a year ago. Everything there is well overpriced

and pretty much unaffordable to the average person (well, the average punk at least—I honestly have no clue what the average person can afford), that is, unless you have food stamps. They also happen to be one of the only places in the neighborhood that takes them. They also let you buy hot sandwiches with them—which is actually really awesome. It's obvious they don't deal with people using EBT very often in there and I'm not quite sure if they know that they're not allowed to do that. But I'm definitely not complaining—I wouldn't be able to afford their fair trade, humanely slaughtered, free range deli sandwiches otherwise. But besides that, and their wonderful cheese selection, the only good thing about the place is that they sell ice creams cones. On EBT.

So after spending most of the past two days at *MRR*, slowly stressing out more and more while editing and whatnot, I decided to treat myself and de-stress from the tension of the magazine and overwhelming city life with some ice cream. Mint chocolate-chip. Single scoop. Waffle cone. Classic. One lick will take me away from all of this. I just know it.

But, of course, as soon as I get there I have a mini Larry David freakout as the woman in front of me, and the three kids she has in tow, need to sample every single flavor. And every combination of flavors—after all, if you're gonna get mix-n-match double scoops you better know exactly how everything will taste, right?

Fucking people.

So after standing in line for about fifteen minutes, watching people eating ice cream, I finally get my cone and head back to *MRR*.

Funnily enough, I actually end up walking behind the over-samplers for the couple of blocks going towards my street. They're being pretty loud, laughing. But I couldn't care less. I've got my ice cream, and I've also got a soda—'cause I was thinking for later. So I turn on to my block thinking to myself, "Whatever, these people probably, actually aren't so bad. They're just serious about their ice cream. I suppose I can respect that..."

And then just as I'm about to get to my house I watch as this douchebag coming down the wide-open sidewalk plows right through them.

And then yells at one of the kids.

Full on nerdrage.

Immediately the woman got on him, "Hey! Seriously—you're an adult. These are kids, chill out. "

To which Sir Fedora counters with an anger-sputter, "Their age should not be a factor in excusing their behavior!"

And he begins to now yell at her—in front of the kids. He starts chastising and lecturing this woman about how she should do a better job of raising them, and that they're undisciplined and out of control, and that they should learn how to apologize. He goes on and on and on...

Hey 20-something white dude. You are never going to look good yelling on the sidewalk, at night, at an older black woman, with three kids—all of them eating ice cream cones—about exactly how she should raise those kids while you're standing in the historically black neighborhood of San Francisco that is gentrifying at the speed of light.

So, being the noble and principled loudmouth that I am, I felt compelled to intervene and tell the guy to shut up, chill out and fuck off. I make him aware that he's acting out of line and like a privileged, sniveling asshole. He invites me to mind my own business and shut the fuck up. I got my barbs in, he got his, and I figure… that's it. We're done. He yelled, I yelled, we both accomplished nothing, but feel like we both came out on top, and now we go about the rest of our night.

The woman thanks me, curses at the asshat, and she and the children go back to heading towards wherever it was they were heading for in the first place. I walk away, hatelicking my cone and cursing this ridiculous, stupid world. The moment has passed and our normal lives have resumed.

Or so I thought.

As soon as I'm down the block, at my door—literally with the key in the lock—I catch the guy out of the corner of my eye. And just as I turn my head to get a better look at Sir Neckbeard, still standing there seething, he taps the last of his available douche mana to conjure up a "Well, next time mind your own business... *asshole*!"

Really?! Come on! I thought we did our little city-life-is-tense-and-strangers-are-dicks dance and thought it was time for the you-won't-believe-the-asshole-I-just-ran-into spiel to the first friend / roommate we see when we walk through the door. I thought we got it all out of our system and it was time to complain / brag / whine on various social media about the whole thing.

I guess not.

So I walk right up to him, ice cream cone in one hand, soda in the other, and get in his face.

"Do you really want to escalate this? I walked away and was at my front door. My key was in the lock. Did you really have to try to get the last word in before I walked inside it? You do realize this isn't the internet."

"Back off or I'm going to call the cops."

"Fuck you... and the cops."

That one obviously takes him by surprise. He kinda reels back a little bit, dazed. Angry and confused that the threat of the police not only didn't deter me from confronting him further, but actually made me even angrier. I see him take the time to work out his mental captcha. After a couple of awkward half-stutters he finally solves it and manages to call me an asshole again. So I call him a piece of shit, give him a sturdy and dismissive "pssssh" shove and walk away.

And he calls the cops on me.

Now my neighbor, who had been walking her dogs down the block more and more slowly, so as to scope out the action, gets involved:

"Are you really calling the cops on him? 'Cause I saw everything... hey, did you mention to them that you suck? Wait, are you describing him as if he's going somewhere?! It doesn't look like he is. Neither am I. Oh, did you mention that he's eating an ice cream cone?"

And then the dude, believe it or not, actually says, "He's eating an ice cream cone..."

My face when.

If you call the cops and say that a dude with an ice cream cone assaulted you and then when they show up the dude is still there, with a half eaten ice cream cone, don't be surprised when they tell you to fuck off. I can guarantee you that if there's ever two people standing next to each other, the one eating the ice cream cone isn't going to be the one that looks like the asshole.

This is what I mean.

People.

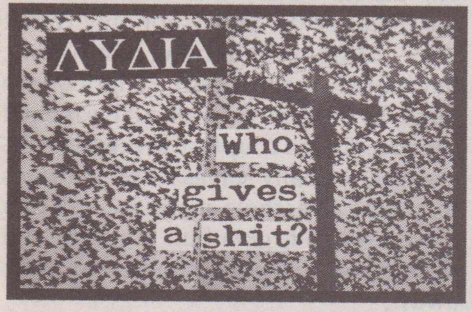
I sincerely hope that guys' night was ruined. I can't even walk down the street eating an ice cream cone in peace without some rando buttmonger messing it all up for everyone in his way. And this is just one guy. *One*. No wonder I'm so anxious all the time. These fools could appear anywhere, at anytime. But at least I do have some comfort knowing that given the kind of person that guy seems to be, his night was most likely ruined. He's probably still stewing in *l'esprit de l'escalier* and hate-hashtagging his thumbs raw. My night? Well, I really wish I didn't have to deal with an idiot *and* the cops right outside my front door, but it definitely wasn't *completely* ruined—I mean, at least I got to eat some ice cream.

So what now?

Well, I think it's high time for a nice, long, late-night stroll through the park.

Alone.

Away from all these fucking people.



Holy shit where has the month gone? Today is already Sunday the 27th of April. That's *exactly* two years since I arrived at SFO airport, ready to start my journey as the new *MRR* coordinator. I can't believe it's already been than long, it still feels like yesterday I was gapping at the green-taped record collection and smoking my first cigarette in the Tim Yo courtyard, truly buzzed and on high from everything.

Running *MRR* is a crazy, amazing experience, yet I think if we were to tell most punks what the actual job is, they would run away in terror. Or laugh at us for being lunatics! "Not get paid? Work over 48 hours a week? Ha!" For real though, it is the most demanding and rewarding job I have ever done. It's thankless, intensely stressful and requires a pretty strong character that can roll with the punches, take things with a pinch of salt when necessary, offer support and solutions, deal with every kind of punk imaginable (don't waste time on the haters), and also be an emotional and psychological rock to handle it all without jeopardizing the magazine, its financial or ethical integrity, or any of the 200+ shitworkers involved. And there is also that small thing of remembering to give yourself some time and space to consider things with a clear head and gain some always-helpful perspective. When pulled from all sides, every so often you need to centre yourself enough to remember what balanced feels like.

What won't kill you will only make you stronger says the cliché (for a reason I suppose) and even though I hate making mistakes, and often in my efforts to avoid them end up making even larger ones, I am always willing to learn from them and admit that I might have been wrong. Almost everything goes through the three coords, and we are always working extra hard to keep up—we are basically on overdrive almost all of the time, just by nature of the job, due the sheer volume of things we must do and take care of on a monthly basis. Add to this the weekly crises and unforeseen dramas that inevitably veer their heads just at the wrong time.

Juggling all of it is our job but we've gotta have a break sometimes, even if only to regroup and continue kicking ass the other 363 days of the year. The only two sort of "holidays" we do at *MRR* are Punxgiving and the 4th of July barbeque—and again, not because we celebrate/agree with the events that happened on those days, but more so because everything is closed, (our printer and vendors included), a lot of our shitworkers are away and hell, kicking back with friends and fellow shitworkers to have some beer and hot-dogs is necessary sometimes—all work and no play make coords a grumpy bunch. So we decided to add one more day to the *MRR* holiday calendar: 420. Which was, coincidentally this year, also Easter day. Which was, coincidentally this year, the same day for both Western Christian churches and Easter Orthodox churches. (Having been raised in Greece, a traditionally Orthodox country, but with half of my family being from England, and loosely raised C of E, I've always been aware of both dates as they often determined possible time off/visits to or from the UK.) It seemed everyone was on holiday for some reason or other, but while for *MRR* it had nothing to do with religion (or weed, really), the events in our city seemed to slow down our operations enough to make it pointless to resist—it's basically hoards and hoards of people out in the streets smoking pot and acting weird, so making a trip to or from the compound seems like a scene out of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, only you are the only one *not* on drugs and you're in a bus or train, or stuck in traffic, or swerving through rowdy drunk and high people on your bike.

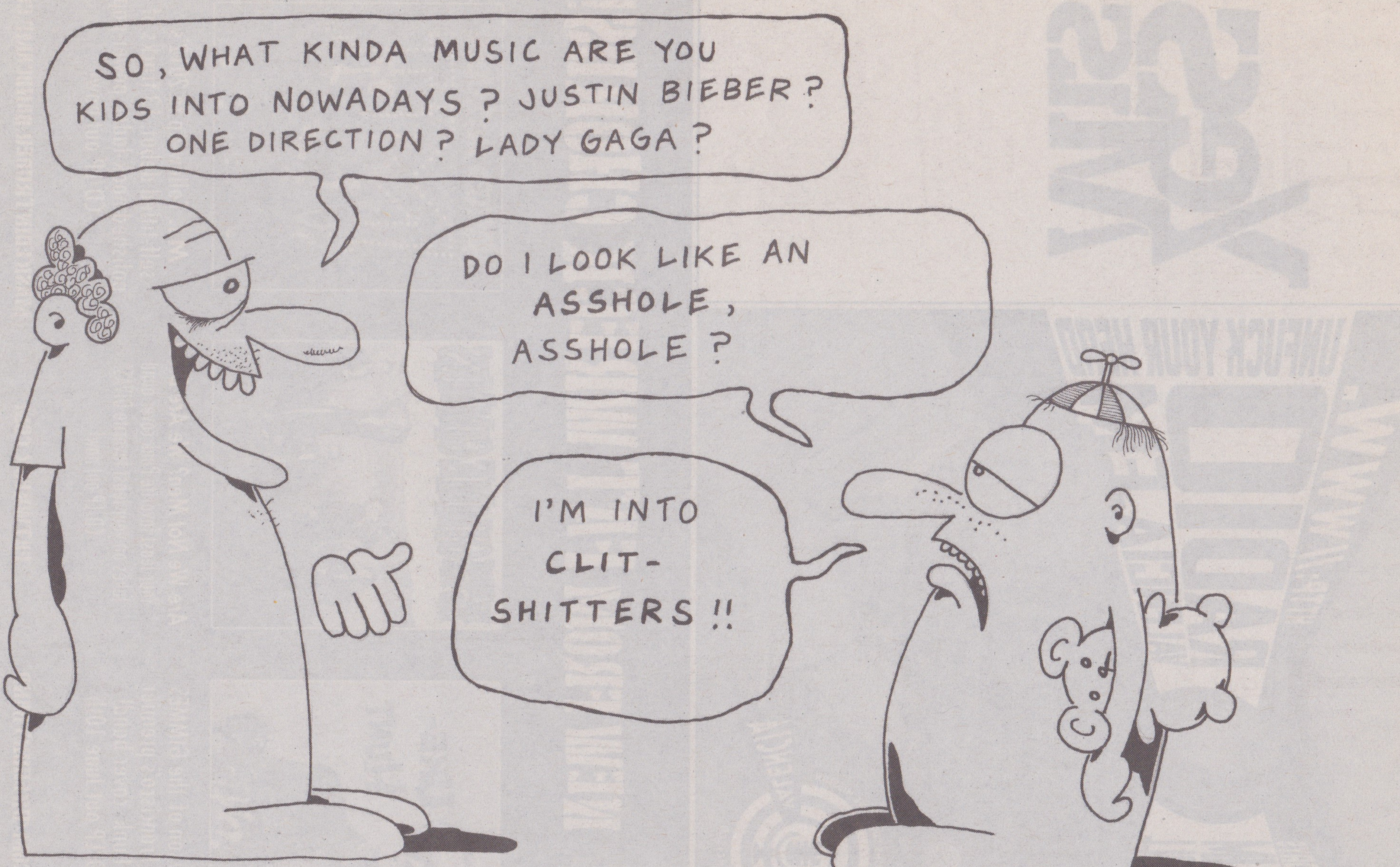
This month there was also an insane amount of shows! I saw Destruction Unit (who were just massively great) and CCR Headcleaner (who were different live to what I expected them to be, but still not as good as I'd hoped), then a week after that I missed OM (who now have the very creative drummer from Grails, and a sitar apparently) and on actual 420, Godlfesh were also in town! I had helped with a couple of Justin Broadrick's shows in Athens when he toured with Jesu, and he's a really, really stan up chap, but have yet to check Godflesh off my list! Agh.

That same weekend was Tankcrimes' Brainsqueeze Festival, with bands such as Negative Approach, Municipal Waste, Fucked Up, Conquest for Death, Cannabis Corpse, Bat, Final Conflict and much more. I went the first day and I gotta say, I think Iron Reagan stole the show: snotty thrash punk, songs that were short, fast and loud, with guitars that slayed and a singer who seemed a bit insane. Good stuff and congrats to Scotty for doing such a good job.

I will leave you with a thought from *Distort* #43. While interviewing Puce Mary, Daniel writes, "I spend a lot of my time writing, for which solitude is necessary, but the result is that often the writing is an expression of sickness, as often the impulse to be alone is the impulse to not infect anyone." That's a keen observation, one I can relate to on some level, and like Puce Mary says, I find it's more about me not get infected by others, rather than the other way around; as if any outside influence might affect the intensity or intention of my thoughts.

So often a creative state of mind is achieved in isolation, perhaps because it finds the maker naked and vulnerable; like an animal licking its wounds, or a sinner expelling daemons, or a sexually aroused beast letting their imagination run wild. Over-obsessing, self-debasing; analyzing, scrutinizing. It feels like a ritual I don't want others to be a part of, because it's clumsy, dirty and even embarrassing, both dizzily engrossing and agonizingly soul-draining. When it comes to the writing process, I find that *what* you are writing about is almost irrelevant to finding that zen space where you can focus and channel your thoughts the way you want. I don't have time for much writing anymore, but I do like to read about how others manage their own creative process.

Yes Mis
this is a YM advertisement

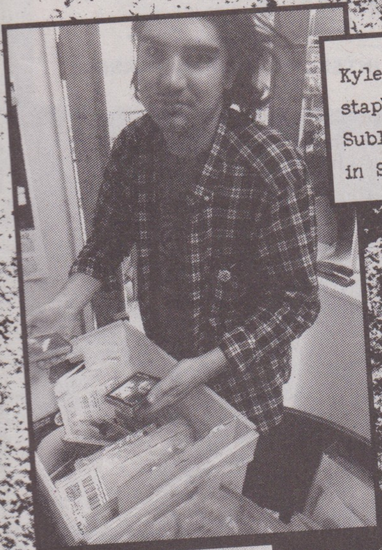

SO, WHAT KINDA MUSIC ARE YOU KIDS INTO NOWADAYS? JUSTIN BIEBER? ONE DIRECTION? LADY GAGA?
DO I LOOK LIKE AN ASSHOLE, ASSHOLE?
I'M INTO CLIT-SHITTERS!!
JANNE KARLSSON '14

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

SHITWØRKER ØF THE MØNTH

PRESENTS

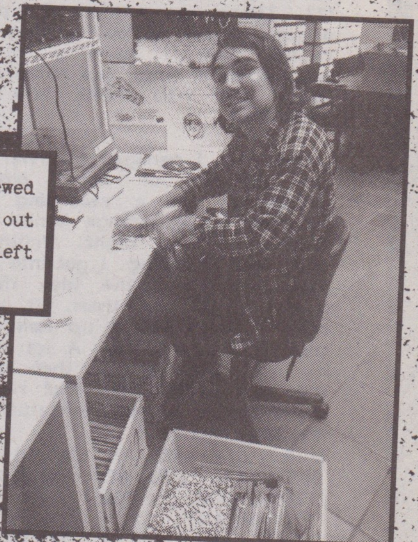
KYLE CANYØN



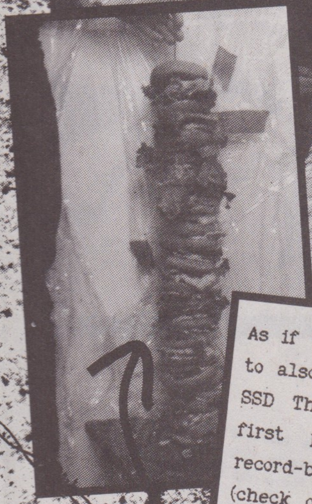
Kyle Canyon is originally from Long Beach, "the land of staple USHC acts such the Descendents, Black Flag and Sublime!" (sic) Before moving to SF in 2012, he spent his time in Southern California booking, playing and attending shows.

Since his arrival at the MRR compound two months ago, Kyle has been extremely helpful in a lot of areas of the magazine. This layout is his first job as our newest layout shitworker, and this issue's What's the Scoop? is all his working! Mouaha ha ha!

He's also started doing demo and record reviews, while still sticking around for the unglamorous things, like scanning records and transcribing interviews for the magazine (check out Anti-You in this issue).



He's green taped and filed a bunch of records, interviewed cover artist Leah Wishnea for the website and helped out at the MRR Presents shows! He even came early and left late to help out with the MRR Garage Sale.



He likes to silkscreen, but can't fit his press into his tiny apartment (yeah, his landlord is a dick). He also helps out with LA-based tape label Building. (check out more at www.bldg006.info)

As if that wasn't enough, Kyle likes to also collect records (send me the SSD The Kids Will Have Their Say first pressing dammit!) and make record-breaking sized vegan meals (check out this giant fucking vegan bacon cheeseburger right here!).

He's working on a solo mid-tempo blackened hardcore project right now, as everyone else is already working on ten other bands. He's also preparing a zine with pictures from Pogo 77 fest from a recent trip to Japan.

MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL CERTIFIED!

He's finishing up his last semester of Creative Writing at SF State and is getting his substitute teaching credentials, so he can mold the minds of the youth.

We want to thank him for being a rad humanoid, who is respectufl, accommodating, "actually reliable" and all around a great person to have at the compound and on the MRR team! Thanks Kyle!

GREG SAGE of the WIPERS
YOU ARE A TARGET OF REACTION

INTERVIEW BY RAY FARRELL

MRR: THE WIPERS HAVE BEEN AROUND SINCE THE BEGINNING OF PUNK IN '77?
GREG: Yeah, late '77; officially on record in '78.
MRR: WERE YOU ALWAYS BASED IN PORTLAND, OREGON?
GREG: No, we vagabond around. The concept began in Portland, ended up being confirmed in Florida. But our first show was in Portland.

MRR: WHY DID YOU START A BAND?
GREG: Nothing else to do. It was a perfect time to start one. The '70s were dead musically, except for the STOOGES and BEEFHEART (the underground of the time). BAD COMPANY was big. I wasn't inspired, so I messed around with recording equipment by myself, when suddenly this outbreak of punk came in '77. There was a place for people with original music without looking for a big record deal. I made a lot of radio commercials at first; real abrasive stuff.
MRR: DID YOU WORK FOR A RADIO STATION?

GREG: No, I managed a movie theater for the purpose of using one of the auditoriums as a recording studio. I recorded these strange bands as a small business late at night. Writing my own stuff and recording. I got into doing radio commercials and the idea that nobody listens closely to them. It worked out really well. I ended up making a lot of commercials for films. A lot of times I'd have the same problem then as I do now with the WIPERS; in that radio stations would refuse to play the stuff because it was too abrasive.
MRR: GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF ONE. LET'S SAY YOU WERE HIRED TO DO A COMMERCIAL FOR AN ITALIAN RESTAURANT.
GREG: (laughs). I didn't do Italian restaurant commercials. I did mostly commercials for films. "Freaks" was my claim to fame in that area. Me and a friend wrote the script. We made it as scary as the movie...we re-generated about a hundred people's laughters. It sounded like you walked into a closet with a hundred crazy people. It became a real cult thing. This guy from L.A. heard it and got a copy for the guy who owned the rights to the film. They used it for their ad campaign. I ended up getting ripped off by some of these producers.
MRR: WHAT WAS PORTLAND LIKE IN '77?
GREG: From the first show we played, we were accepted, but we weren't trendy enough at the time...fashionwise. It wasn't organized politically. People sensed that we were different from the commercial new wave pop. I don't consider us punk or hardcore or pop. How do you classify any music without placing a limit on it? There's so many diversions. Any music can get to a point where everything has been done. You gotta keep climbing. MRR: PEOPLE LIKE TRENDS.
GREG: I have a lot of respect for hardcore punk. But I'm afraid that it's so organized that anti-factions have been created. A chain reaction. Around and around and around. OK, we're not personally

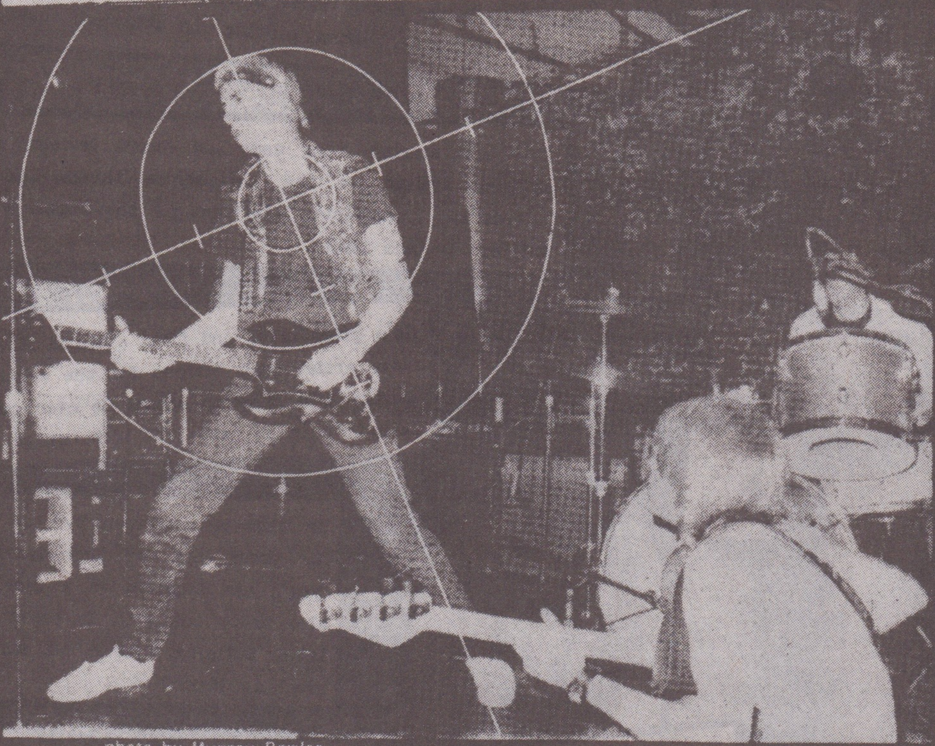


photo by Murray Bowles

Doesn't matter who you are
or what you are
or where you are.
Out in the streets
or locked secure in your room.

So don't confuse them with your heroes
cause it only means zero.
You will never have to try too hard

IN THEIR EYES
YOU ARE A TARGET
YOU ARE A TARGET
YOU ARE A TARGET

TO BE A PRODUCT OF EXTRACTION
TO BE A PRODUCT OF EXTRACTION
TO BE A PRODUCT OF EXTRACTION

Don't confuse them with your idols
cause they don't really appreciate it.
See, you never have to try too hard

MISTAKEN IDENTITY
MISTAKEN IDENTITY
MISTAKEN IDENTITY
MISTAKEN IDENTITY
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MISTAKEN IDENTITY

TO BE A TARGET FOR REACTION
TO BE A TARGET FOR REACTION
TO BE A TARGET FOR REACTION

connected to hardcore or any movement. I think in some areas people burn out if they're not part of a group of followers. There'll be no clubs for a while, as in Portland, then someone will start one. Then it gets 'political' with the club. Everyone finds something wrong with that scene, so there's never a focal point for the energy. Then the club fails and dissappears and everyone complains about no place to go. In other big cities, the scene is taken for granted. I don't get depressed about it anymore though.

MRR: WHY DID IT TAKE YOU SO LONG TO PLAY IN CALIFORNIA?

GREG: To me, L.A., S.F., and N.Y. are too cosmopolitan to really care for something that's not real big at the moment. It's dictated by trend. I always avoided them. We usually go through the Midwest and play where the pressure doesn't exist. We attract more individualistic types: people that decide for themselves whether they like it or not. I try to write songs that are more emotional. We aren't really hardcore political, though we are socially political. Our song, "Target For Reaction" is about this, about how peer pressure dictates environment and what you think, just as government dictates how you live. It's the same disease that creates political aggression. I try to go deeper than the surface. Some say it's too deep. A lot of people don't wanna hear that.

MRR: TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PREFERENCE FOR OLD EQUIPMENT.

GREG: Well, the newer stuff strives for perfection on paper. Spec sheets, minimal this and that, total perfection. Older equipment wasn't designed for perfection. We're not a perfect band. we want it to be raw. In new stuff, all the overtones and noise are gone. When you get something so perfect, it doesn't fit into your environment. It's the same with sound.

MRR: DO YOU LOOK FOR OLD EQUIPMENT ON TOUR?

GREG: No, I can't afford to. Our sound man does. I look for rooms. we recorded Over The Edge in a basement of a house I rented out. Real primitive. I could concentrate there.

MRR: RECORDING STUDIOS ARE ABOUT AS COMFORTABLE AS DENTIST OFFICES.

GREG: Yeah. I'm not used to an environment that totally plush, where people try to stick coke up my nose. I like isolated dingy basements.

MRR: THE WIPERS MUSIC AND LYRICS REFLECT A LOT OF THE ORIGINAL SPIRIT OF PUNK IN THE '70S. NOTHING SEEMS TO HAVE CHANGED IN YOUR MUSIC OUTSIDE OF BECOMING EVEN MORE AGGRESSIVE.

GREG: You said spirit...that's what it is. It's alive. We haven't been exploited by time or peer pressure. Classification is out of the picture.

MRR: DO PEOPLE SEE YOUR MUSIC AS DEPRESSING?

GREG: Sure it's depressing. Depression, alienation, and confusion make the world go round. Basically, I'm comfortable when people go through the same things I do. Scratching the surface to go past the headlines....the fine print.

MRR: YOU ALSO TRANSCEND THE DEPRESSION BY MAKING THE STATEMENT AND CRUSHING IT WITH A POWERFUL SONG.

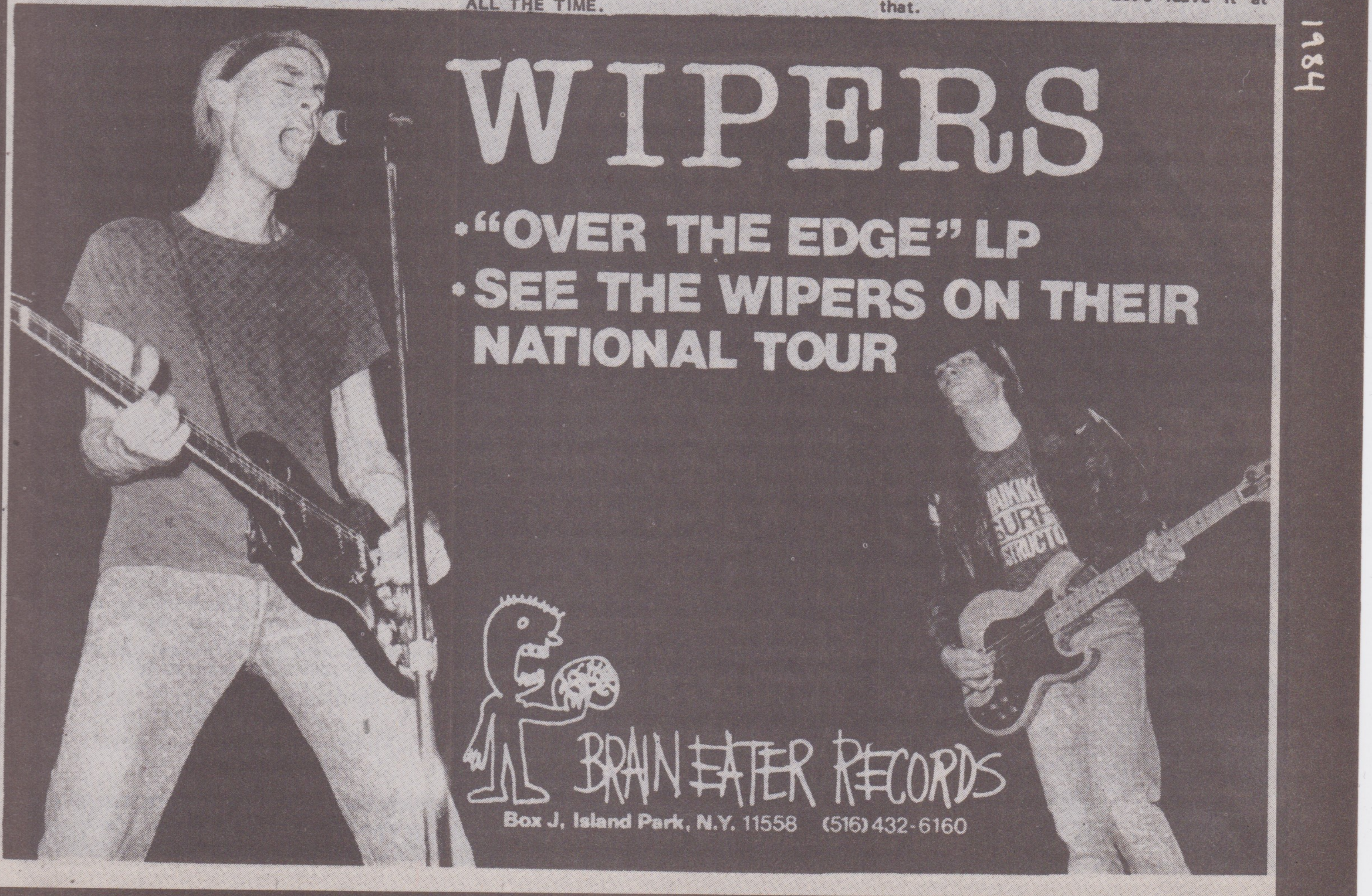
GREG: If we can capture the reality and break through it, that's good. Absorbing the feelings, pushing it underneath and shaking it free. We want the emotion to be recorded onto that piece of plastic with the sound waves.

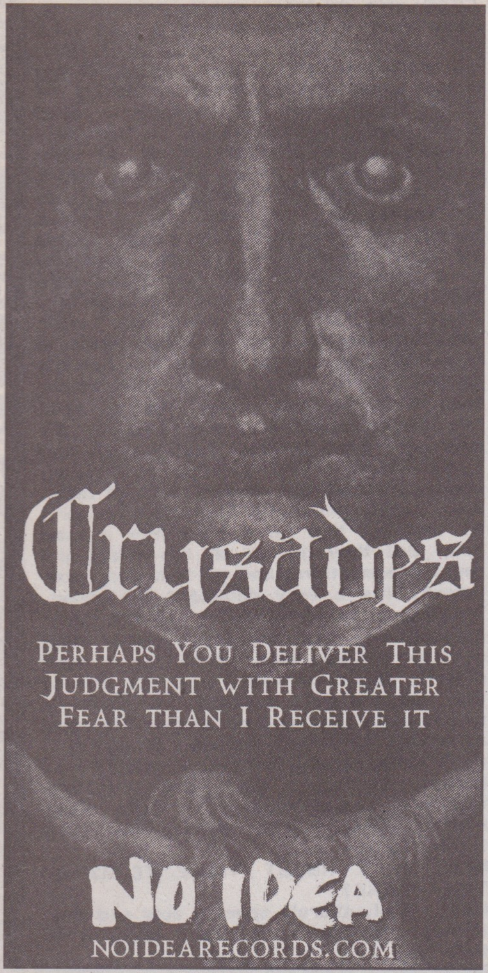
MRR: YOU GUYS SEEM REAL SERIOUS ALL THE TIME.

GREG: We do enjoy making records. We make very little money and it goes back into the band. We work really hard. But, we are pro wrestling fans. I mean, if you wanna know what we have fun with. I did this album with a wrestler named Beauregard. He was great. I was at a friend's house practicing, and he came over. I saw him do an interview, and I was amazed. He had a 45 and wanted to do an album. He liked the way I played guitar. He gave me some passes to his matches. But after he did the record, he kinda turned into a good guy to sell more records. That was the end of his career. When we tour, we check out other wrestling leagues, but Portland seems to have the best though. We've got Rip the Crawler, Oliver, The Assissin. They're the ones to watch. They cripple 'em up, send 'em out on stretchers, and wait for the next one. Brad (WIPERS bass player) and I worked on a film crew for a wrestling special, and we got to meet a lot of them. Some people think it's false, like he can't be ramming this guys head into a steel pole. But they go out on the street and see the same thing and go "Oh god, poor fellow". It's a very dedicated profession. There's as many obstacles in the music business. I love wrestling. Here these guys go out and beat the shit out of each other 7 nights a week. How the hell do they get the guts and intestinal fortitude to get out of bed and do it again? It takes a certain breed of person. Doing what we're doing takes a certain..., should I be modest to say, guts and intestinal fortitude to play night after night. Some nights, like tonight, getting ber cans thrown at us.

MRR: WHAT ABOUT THESE TEAMS OF TWO ON ONE?

GREG: Well, there's opening acts and then there's the headliners. Let's leave it at that.





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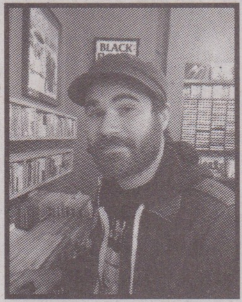
MRR asks you!

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

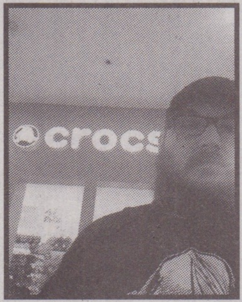
This month's question: "What other type of '_______ Store Day' do you wish existed?"
Asked at various record stores around the Bay Area on Record Store Day by Kyle Canyon.

Andy Sweet, 25,
San Francisco
Skate Shop Day...
or Liquor Store Day.

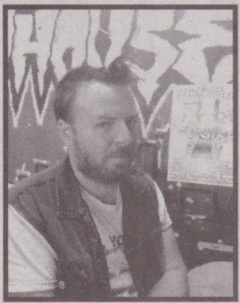


Boofa Mike, 27,
Sacramento
Definitely Pizza Day.
Just slices and slices of
pizza.

Dharma, 22,
Oakland
Record Store Days? I've
never heard of
Record Store Days...



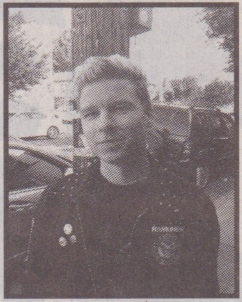
Floss Wrestler, 27,
Burbank
Croc Store Day, 'cause
they are the most
comfortable shows,
and it would be cool
to get offensive colors.



Greg Harvester, 37,
San Francisco
Toilet Store.
I wish there was a
Toilet Store day.

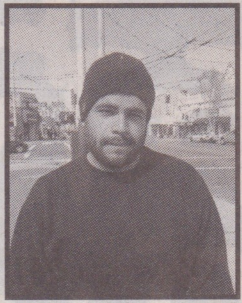
Jonathan, 43,
Oakland
Illustrious Person
Giving Away Their
Clothes Day.

Melissa, 21
San Francisco
Typewriter Store Day,
that'd be sick.



Michael, 20,
Oakland
Probably like an instrument store.
Like Guitar Center, but not them
'cause they suck.

Michelle, 25,
San Francisco
It's be really cool to have
a specific genre day,
specific to different genres:
like post-punk, goth,
anything.



Oliver, 25,
San Francisco
Thrift Store or
Art Supply Store Day.

We want to know what the scoop is in your town! Send your question and answers along with ten hi-res pics to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com and let the punx know!!!

PESADILLA DISTOPIKA

I met up with Pesadilla Distopika at their kick off tour show last year at E. 7th Punx Warehouse in Los Angeles. We got to talk about the record but also got to highlight a little bit about where they are from - San Bernardino, Ca. Pesadilla Distopika recently completed a winter West Coast tour with Abortion Reels and have a new record titled No Hay Ninguna Manera De Eskapar on Verdugo Discos. Interview and photos by Oscar Gutierrez.

Mark: Vocals
Ronny: Bass
Chaz: Drums
Alec: Guitar

Contact: verdugosdiscos.com
pesadilladistopika@gmail.com

MRR: How did Pesadilla Distopika meet and form?
Mark: We formed in San Bernardino in 2013, like, in April. Well, I met Ronny...
Ronny: Through a punk message board in Spanish...
Mark: Yeah, it was a message board in Spanish that was all about Spanish punk and I was like, "Oh damn, this guy is from Colton," which is close by. And there isn't much of a punk scene over there so when someone is close by, you want to get to know them. There isn't a big punk scene in San Bernardino, like in LA. And that's how I met Ronny, and then we started riding bikes and just chilling.
Ronny: Yup, I met this fool Mark on the internet. We used to be in a band before so that's another way I know Mark.

MRR: For the new record you have out, No Hay Ninguna Manera De Eskapar, did you all have previous experience with recording? How was the process for you?
Mark: The process was fast. Chaz and I just wrote the songs and recorded. I really hate recording. It happened in a day...This is Chaz right here!
Chaz: S'up! My name is Chaz, I am coming in late and I play drums. This fool, Mark, told me he wanted to start a band, and I just added drums because he already had the guitar and I didn't think it was going to be a real project, but we play shows now.

MRR: How is the song writing process and what are some of the things you all talk about in your songs?
Mark: Basically, I just write some riffs and show everyone. Then we might change them up and what not. We all add our own stuff into the songs. We got songs about different things like, fucked up police.

MRR: How did folks receive the record?
Mark: I think people are into it, but it doesn't really matter. It's cool because I made the record on my own and I am trying to put it out on my own through Verdugo Discos. It's cool that people like it, that way I can get rid of the records and I don't have to look at them anymore once they are gone. It hasn't been out for that long and this is our record release show. People seem to dig it, but honestly I don't care if people like it or not.
Chaz: Yeah, the tapes moved. The tapes are gone so I guess people liked those. Now it seems people are buying the record, so maybe they like it.

MRR: Was there any theme or sound influences with this last record?
Mark: For me, maybe not sound-wise, but I drew back on things I got into when I first got into punk. Bands like Los Crudos, Kontraattaque, Tragatelo and other similar bands. That was the whole point of trying to start a Spanish-speaking punk band, because it was cool and I gravitated towards that more. But I guess sound influences would probably be shit like Death Side, Gauze, MG15, Xenofobia, Atoxxxico,

and Qloaca Letal.
Chaz: Yeah, I don't know, I just play drums.
Ronny: Chaz is influenced by Travis Barker. [laughter]

MRR: There is some really cool artwork on the cover of the new EP done by Alex Heir. Did you know him before or did y'all contact him specifically to do some of the cover art?
Mark: Yeah, I didn't really know him before. He was doing cool stuff that I really liked so I just hit him up and asked him if he would do it. His shit came out really good.

MRR: You were talking earlier about starting up Verdugo Discos. What is the importance to all of you that the scene continues making things, such as recording and distribution, "DIY"?
Mark: DIY is probably the strongest ethic in punk so it's really important. It's cool because I can make records and music on my own or together with my friends as a project, and nobody has to tell us how many are being pressed or what type of artwork will go on it. The DIY-aspect of it is important to me and it's something I believe in.
Ronny: The DIY-aspect is cool. Like, when putting out the record we just kind of hung out and assembled it. It's fun. It makes you appreciate stuff because a lot of bands put out a gang of work and it's basically just fun. That's it.
Mark: Yeah, it's cool to do. It makes you realize how much work there is behind a project. Once you put it out, it feels more meaningful and, for me, that's cool. I want to continue to put out more records. Right now, I am planning on releasing two 7"s by Ekolalia and Destruye Y Huye. Those should be really good.

MRR: We touched base earlier on San Bernardino. Folks don't usually talk about San Bernardino punks. Are there any punks in San Bernardino? Do you ever play in San Bernardino, or are the majority of shows in LA?
Mark: Well, in San Bernardino there aren't really that many people into punk. At least, I don't think there are as many people into punk as you would find in LA. It's funny because Chaz and I were talking about this while driving around the other night. When we were in high school you would see a lot more punks walking around on the streets. Now, most kids out in San Bernardino are into swag shit and wearing flat-brimmed hats and that's about it.
Ronny: And metalcore!
Mark: Yeah! That's why when I met Ronny, it was cool because I had to find this fool and hang out with him 'cause he was into the cool music that I was into.
Chaz: Yeah, like when we were in school, I met Mark 'cause we traded tapes and were both into punk. We had a couple fools that were really into punk. Now, I work at schools and I see no one who's into punk. It's kind of weird. We do shows out there but not a lot of people come, so we just play out here now.
Ronny: Yeah, there are no punks in San Bernardino. If there are punks, there's like weird pay-to-play punk shows. They're like Social Distortion and they bring a lot of creepy people, like weird sad biker dads.
Mark: Yeah, I was going to say the only cool place out there to play is the Loko Lounge, which is in Mentone and that's fifteen minutes away from us. Those shows are really cool. If anyone in the Inland Empire can go out to those shows, I really recommend it. Loko Lounge is like the only place to play out there. Sometimes a lot of people from Santa Ana, LA or Orange County don't want to go out there, but if they do, it's worth it. Those shows are really cool and everyone that goes to them wants to go back.

MRR: As for the tour with Abortion Reels, was this the first time y'all toured?
Mark: Yeah, this was Abortion Reels' first tour and we have been playing a lot of local shows. We kind of just wanted to get out of the area.
Chaz: We don't want to get played out!
Mark: Yeah, we don't want to just continue playing shows out here. We want to get out of the area for a bit to have fun and see other places. Sometimes, I just feel like getting out of here!
Chaz: I just want to play other places. I'm really bored with my life, so I just want to go other places.
Ronny: Yeah, it's cool. I've only been to Mexico. It's always San Bernardino, Mexico, San Bernardino and Mexico. I have never really been anywhere else in the US. I was excited to go to the Bay Area, Portland, and Seattle, but I like being home. San Bernardino is cool.

MRR: And how many dates was the tour?
Mark: We did eleven dates total. It was just up and down the coast.

MRR: How did you all prepare for it?
Mark: Well, we practiced a couple of times and got the record ready. A homie hooked us up with letting us rent his van. I made a couple shirts and shit. That's about it. I couldn't wait to get out of here.

MRR: Were you connected with folks at the tour stops you played, or are these new connections?
Ronny: We kind of knew the people because we go to shows and we become friends with people who tour down here. I feel like we know almost everyone from every show we go to.
Mark: Yeah, it's just people that we knew before, that were in cool bands and would come down here. Then, you just become friends with them most of the time. I knew most of the people I hit up for shows. If I didn't know someone in a city where I wanted to play a show, I just asked a friend if they knew anyone I could ask. It's pretty easy.

MRR: What are the band's new year resolutions?
Mark: It's kind of weird, we plan things. I think we are organized, but if we create a song, it comes together in spurts and then we just don't write songs for a long time. We hope to write more stuff and we are going to play Latino Punk Fest in New York next year in August. That's a long way from now, but we look forward to playing that. We are also gonna play in Tijuana in April 2014. Maybe do another release if we feel inspired to write more stuff.

MRR: Talking about Latino Fest, it hasn't happened in a while, and I know San Antonio had a small-scale one last year. Do you think it's important to have intentional spaces like that (e.g. CLIT Fest, Think and Die Thinking, Lady Fest and Latino Fest) every year? If so, why? Should we be having more fests that are intentional like that?
Mark: For me, it's funny because in southern California, pretty much every show is a Latino Fest. I understand, though, that that's not the case everywhere you go. Some places are probably super out of touch with that and don't really recognize it. So, I think it is important to have those spaces to have these kinds of fests, because it introduces whatever type of scene you want to expose to new punks and new people that may not have otherwise had the chance to check out those bands.

MRR: Last words?
Chaz: I don't know. I just don't want to drop my sticks. San Bernardino is cool. If you ever get a chance to check it out, it's really tight out there. A lot of people don't like it, but it's really cool.
Mark: Yeah, check out the discount mall, the swap meets and the food. There's a lot of cool food. It's kind of a fucked up place sometimes but it's not so bad as people make it seem. The west side in San Bernardino is really one of the coolest places in the world to me because it has a lot of history. It's where the old barrio is. Also, a shout-out to the homies, Beanzattack and Desi Lu Photography for providing some photos for our record.

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THE LOWEST

As soon as I heard their first single, I knew this band was special. Their dedication, devotion, and hardworking mentality most of all, made the Lowest one of the most important Polish HC/ punk bands of the modern era. Sad, depressive, sometimes angry lyrics adequately dressed-up an original way of understanding hardcore as a genre; furious, but still melodic, sometimes even mellow. They tour a lot, they work for themselves and still believe in the scene. Recently, they released a fresh album, Divided through Pasażer Records. This interview was originally published in the Polish fanzine Pasażer in 2013. Interview by Maciej Mroczek. Pictures from the band's archive.

Paul: I've got some soya and some brown rice here, and sweet-chilli sauce. (He eats soya and rice)

Bart: I try to avoid soy recently .

MRR: Are you bulking up ?

Paul: Yep. It's autumn, good time for bulking. Of course my goal isn't to be a bodybuilder. I do other things, I train muay thai, kettlebells. I'm just trying to keep the body in shape. The mind can then work better. Let's just say that it is a form of self-development.

Bart: I was recently in the gym at 11am . I've seen a really good crew there. You know, kind of guys who cannot bend their arm at the elbow to the end.

MRR: We are meeting two days after Independence Day, which, surprisingly, this year ran quite turbulently. What do you think?

Bart: It's good that there was no counter-demo this year. It's much better just to manifest your views without physical confrontation. But media sucks again. I read sometimes right-wing newspapers and portals, and my impression is that many of them are either manipulated or run by complete idiots. The best example is the "Rzeczpospolita". Two years ago they were writing all the time about the German Antifa, that they were beating some Poles. Not a word about right wing nationalists and fascists with Celtic crosses all over them, who were marching in the March of Independence. Years ago, the nationalists invited Hungarian and Italian fascists, but somehow no one mentioned anything about it either. This year some football hooligans and other idiots attacked squats, the Russian embassy, and... a rainbow, an art installation in the city centre. They burned it down.

Paul: Polish nationalists are quite smart. They were able to activate a large part of the population that wanted somehow to demonstrate their attachment to the homeland. During the last few years, the March of Independence has become a very recognizable brand (it's not an official government march, it was organized by some Polish far right-wing activists). I understand many regular people who don't want to demonstrate their patriotism with the Polish president and prime minister in official march. Our society is very divided. Many people are really poor. And many people still live in the past. History has not spared the Polish for the last two hundred years; partitions, two World Wars, almost half a century of communism. We've had some epic moments in history, a tradition of resistance movement in World War II. People live in the past, because they don't see anything they can be proud of today. In Poland war never ended. We are at war all the time. The rhetoric of war is still alive.

So many regular people participated in the March of Independence, because they want to be proud of something at last. What many people who were marching in Warsaw don't know, is that the real idea behind the march is to make room for nationalists in mainstream politics. Just read on the internet about ONR, the National Radical Camp, one of the organizers of the march. Before the war it was an openly anti-Jewish organization. And today—an organization whose members were involved in such actions as the demolition of the Protestant cemetery in Wielun—walks in front of a 20-thousand "patriotic" parade . Something is really fucked up here. Also the media don't understand what is going on. They want to see everything black and white, but there is just a little black and white here, and many shades of grey. It's a really complicated matter but it just can't fit into two-minute news on TV. Antifa is not a "communist militia" as some right wing media want to see it, and many people marching in the March of Independence are not "Nazis" as left wing media inform. In fact, most of them don't really know who the leaders of the march are. So they are misinformed and used by nationalists. Another interesting fact

is that there is a problem of national symbols in Poland. In the US it's normal to use the national flag. I've seen many bands taking photos with the national flag. In Poland if you use national flag, many people consider you as a nationalist. It's really stupid.

MRR: And it does not seem to you that the concepts and categories that are referenced by the nationalists are a bit out-dated?

Paul: You know, our opinion on the subject is one thing, and what people think, what they are attached to, is something else. In Europe "country" is now a category largely historical. We are in NATO, European Union, and corporations are often more powerful than governments.

Perhaps in a few decades, the institution of the state in general will change its meaning, and Europe will be a federation just like the US. But the problem is not the idea of state. The problem is that the political elites are very far from the society. They live in a completely different world. And you can like it or not, but the "state" is the only power that can more or less effectively oppose corporations. Corporations are the "cancer" of our world. The corporate way of management is to make profit at all cost. The worst thing is that you know whom to blame when you vote in elections, you know who is in charge in your country. But corporations are like Hydra. You can cut off one head, nothing will happen. You can change people, you can change CEOs, nothing will happen. Corporations are like really bad and dangerous version of Hobbes' Leviathan.

MRR: What annoys you in the world?

Bart: I'm pissed off that I don't see opportunities for any change in the political and economic system. I am deceived by the Social Insurance Institution, which is simply inefficient.

Paul: The worst thing that is happening today is social inequality. We multiply the fortunes of people who are already rich. But they are not willing to share. They escape to tax paradises, and it doesn't matter that even in a million years they will not be able to consume their fortunes; they just want to have more and more.

MRR: I am asking about it all, because after listening to your album and reading the lyrics, I feel that you are extremely pissed off. What else is pushing you to play?

Bart: Energy, the ability to shout your anger. Hardcore gives you the opportunity to rebound.

Paul: Hardcore punk means that you can be a complete lack of talent, anti-artist, and still you can create something interesting and valuable. You can shout your anger, and you don't have to be a great singer. You don't have to be a great musician, because the music is usually simple. Not mentioning, that playing in a band is very cool. You play gigs, visit new places, meet new people. And even more fun is to leave the stage and be a normal guy. There're no autographs, no "being an artist" attitude. This is punk. And I love the way how it sticks to regular life.

Bart: Awesome is also the fact that when I look around at my friends, each of them is involved in something—playing in a band, doing a zine and concerts. Hardcore makes you active. You do not need to have some amazing skills, you can still do something cool.

MRR: You mentioned the scene in Warsaw, which in terms of HC is currently experiencing great moments.

Bart: Yes, it's great. Many good bands appeared.

Paul: In my opinion the situation in Warsaw is good and bad at the same time. Good because there are many bands and they are getting better and better. But bad, because young people are not interested in hardcore and punk music.

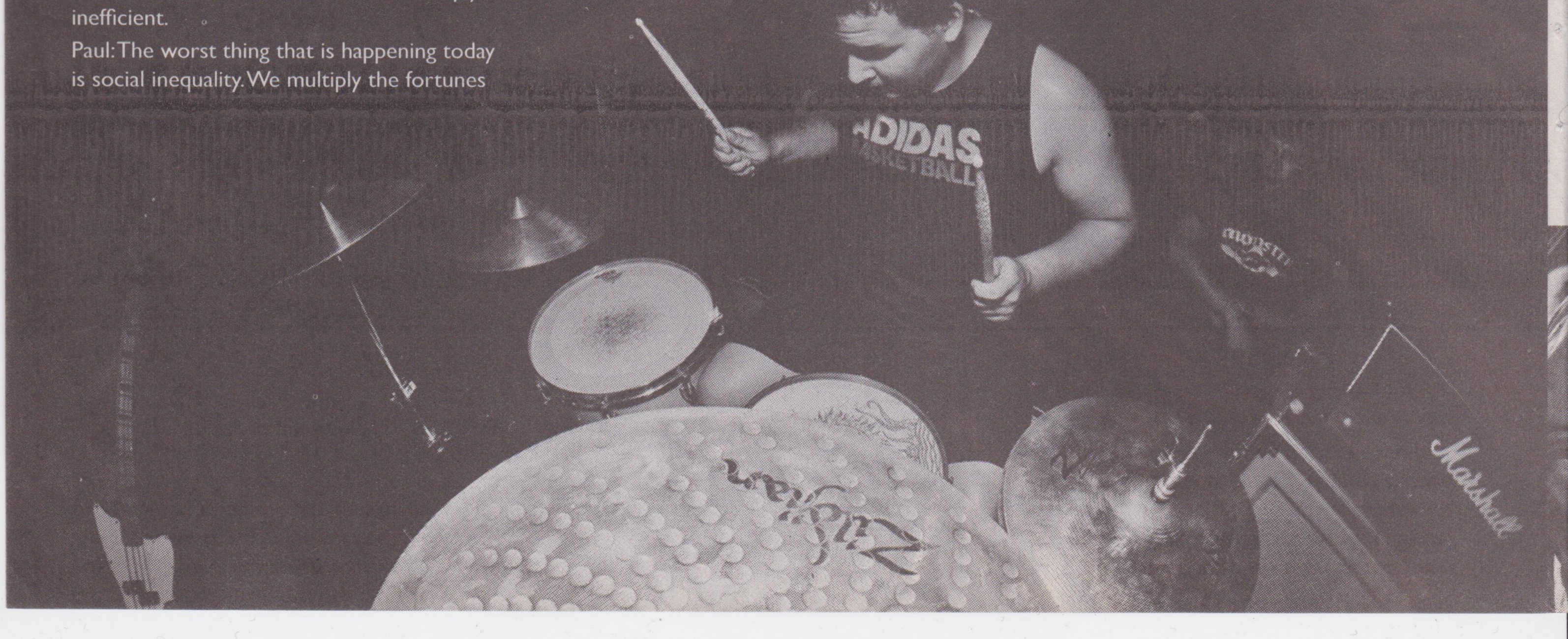
MRR: Don't you think, that many things ended at our generation? You know, we remember what it was like when there was no internet .

Paul: Sure. Today if you can't sell something in a form that can be absorbed in 30 seconds, no one cares about you. It's not a matter of punk or hardcore scenes. It is a question of the direction in which our civilization is heading. Maybe in the future people will again miss for what is honest, real and tangible. HC/punk is something very real. Blood, sweat, emotions. But hardcore in Poland is all the time in deep underground. It's not that easy to find it. Kids in Poland are angry, but they don't know how to find hardcore and punk, or their don't want to. Their anger is mainly consumed by Polish "street" hip-hop with gangsta-wannabe attitude.

Bart: I agree, but I hope that there will be some new people in the scene.

MRR: So what do you understand by the term "unity?"

Paul: Unity means supporting each other. But the truth is that the scene in Warsaw is very divided. But it's happening everywhere in the world. Hardcore is changing. Some big hardcore bands are now just music bands, it's their work, so they are playing as much as possible. Kids in Warsaw who are interested in crust, punk or political hardcore don't go to other shows; kids who like other kinds of hardcore don't care about shows in squats. I know that for someone from the United



States it can be obvious, but here in Poland things were different a few years ago. When I started going to the shows, it was 2001. Unity was something you could witness back then. One thing I love about being in this band is that punks know us and like us. I have got many friends involved in the crust scene. We play a different kind of music, and when you look at us, you may think we are typical "hardcore scenesters". But we are very close to our punk roots. I know many people from Przychodnia squat (the squat attacked by nationalists and hooligans on 11th November 2013). I am there really often.

Bart: I'm frankly pissed off with thoughtless pat-ourselves-on-the-back for the sake of unity.

MRR: Isn't Warsaw a place where it happens all the time?

Bart: In some certain groups.

MRR: You try to tour a lot. How much time and effort does it cost you?

Bart: It depends. Sometimes it's few weeks, sometimes it's few months. The more gigs we played, the more contacts we had. Things are going much better now than before. Besides, everyone in the band is responsible for something, so there is no need for one guy to do everything.

MRR: Which shows you played were coolest, which were not that good?

Paul: We played really many cool shows in crazy places. But we also had some funny ones. When we were on tour with Reality Check, we were playing in Pilsen in the Czech Republic. Four people came. On the other hand—Minsk, Belarus, a few hundred people showed up, and the gig was awesome. St. Petersburg in Russia was very cool. Ukraine was great. Eastern Europe rocks.

MRR: Where would you want to play?

Bart: In Asia, Scandinavia, Australia. Wherever it is possible! Today it's not that difficult to find contacts around the world. The problem is the cost of the trip. We know that when it comes to airline tickets, it gets expensive. But maybe someday it will be possible. We would love to play at Fluff Fest in Czech Republic. It's a great fest.

MRR: Career?

Bart: Cash-in hardcore, it's a bit of a slippery topic. There are, of course, full-time hardcore bands, but I don't think that's something for us. They can do whatever they want, but I just don't find myself in it. And for something completely different—it's funny to me when Scott Vogel of Terror complains that he gave up veganism because it was hard for him on the road.

Paul: The only thing I've ever wanted is to play as many gigs as we can. Playing some fests. It would be cool if people would know us more, maybe then booking a tour would not be such a pain in the ass. You asked about career. Career in the hardcore scene—is it when people care about your music, know your lyrics, have good fun at your gigs ? If it's a career in your opinion, than yes, it would be cool. But if you are talking about other things, like making playing in a band your job—it's not the best idea. I read a great interview with Scott Kelly (Neurosis) a few months ago. He said that they all have regular jobs. Thanks to it, he can write music and make new albums only, when he really wants to. It keeps his music "clean". There is no big money in hardcore. If you want to earn money, it's really not the best place. You got to record new albums all the time, you have to sell them, you have to be constantly on tour. Can you be still honest when you live like that, is your music "clean?"

MRR: Do you want to attack any bigger labels?

Paul: I do not know what you mean by "bigger" labels. Certainly it would be nice to put our record out in a few countries, but I'm sure we are not interested in labels that aren't the part of the scene.

There are some big labels interested in the scene. There are even some corporations interested in the scene. Like Monster Energy Drink. Monster was sponsoring some scene bands. But let's be honest—Monster doesn't give a fuck about the hardcore and punk scene, the hardcore community. All they are interested in is to find new market segments. That's how corporations work. They are

trying to spread everywhere. Today corporations don't sell products. They sell lifestyle; it's something that Naomi Klein wrote about fourteen years ago. Hardcore is so "cool", isn't it? Lots of tattoos, nice clothes, shoes, great gigs, stage-dives and music. Corporations also want to be "cool." If something is cool, it's easy to sell it.

MRR: You care a lot about visual aspects. Optimistic clips, t-shirts, album art...

Paul: We just want everything to fit together. The music is sad, lyrics are focused on more gloomy things that make our world as it is. I sing a lot about religion, god. When I was a kid I was into Christianity, now I'm not. But I want to puke when I see all these bands putting inverted crosses everywhere. That seems awfully childish and foolish. Do you guys even know what you deny? Can you find the Ten Commandments in the Bible? If you don't know anything about religion, but you condemn it, because it is fashionable —it's not really wise. You've got to know your enemy.

MRR: Any ideology behind the band?

Bart: I'm straightedge, we are all vegans or vegetarians, but it's not really a topic that somehow determines our approach to other people.

Paul: I agree. I am glad that I am surrounded by people who do not eat meat. It's really important thing for me, but I don't consider it an "ideology" of the band.

MRR: OK, lets talk about inspiration.

Bart: Patrick and Sunrise, legendary vegan-straightedge band from Poland. Definitely Cro-Mags, who promoted the view that you need to develop all the time. I also like Polish rap. I like Hades.

Paul: It's hard to say that something inspires me. My main inspiration is this world. I can say that some movies or books inspire me, for example the intro from our self-titled first EP is from The Tree of Life by Terrence Malick. Great movie. Film was booed at Cannes, and it seems to me that the audience didn't understand it. It shows the mystery of existence in general, I doesn't focus on human life. You can witness the insignificance of man, the infinity of the world, the power of time. And it shows us that man is nothing but dust, we are in this world only for a moment, and when we run out of it, the world still exists. It took billions of years before man appeared. It's the drama of human existence—we are aware that we are mortal. But at the same time we don't want to accept this simple fact. It's hard to accept the fact that our life is really fragile and fleeting. I like movies or books that manage to catch this. For example, A Treatise on Shelling Beans by Mysliwski, One Hundred Years of Solitude by Marquez, The Unbearable Lightness of Being by Milan Kundera or few books by Tadeusz Konwicki. Really great literature.

MRR: Any last words?

Paul: I like when bands speak between songs. I want to know what they are singing about. I don't like fifteen minutes sets. You can play twenty minutes and say something, I won't be bored, don't be afraid. We are far from the '70s, when punk was just simple questioning of everything, without any counterproposal to the world. There are many things worth singing about.

Bart: Thanks for the interview.

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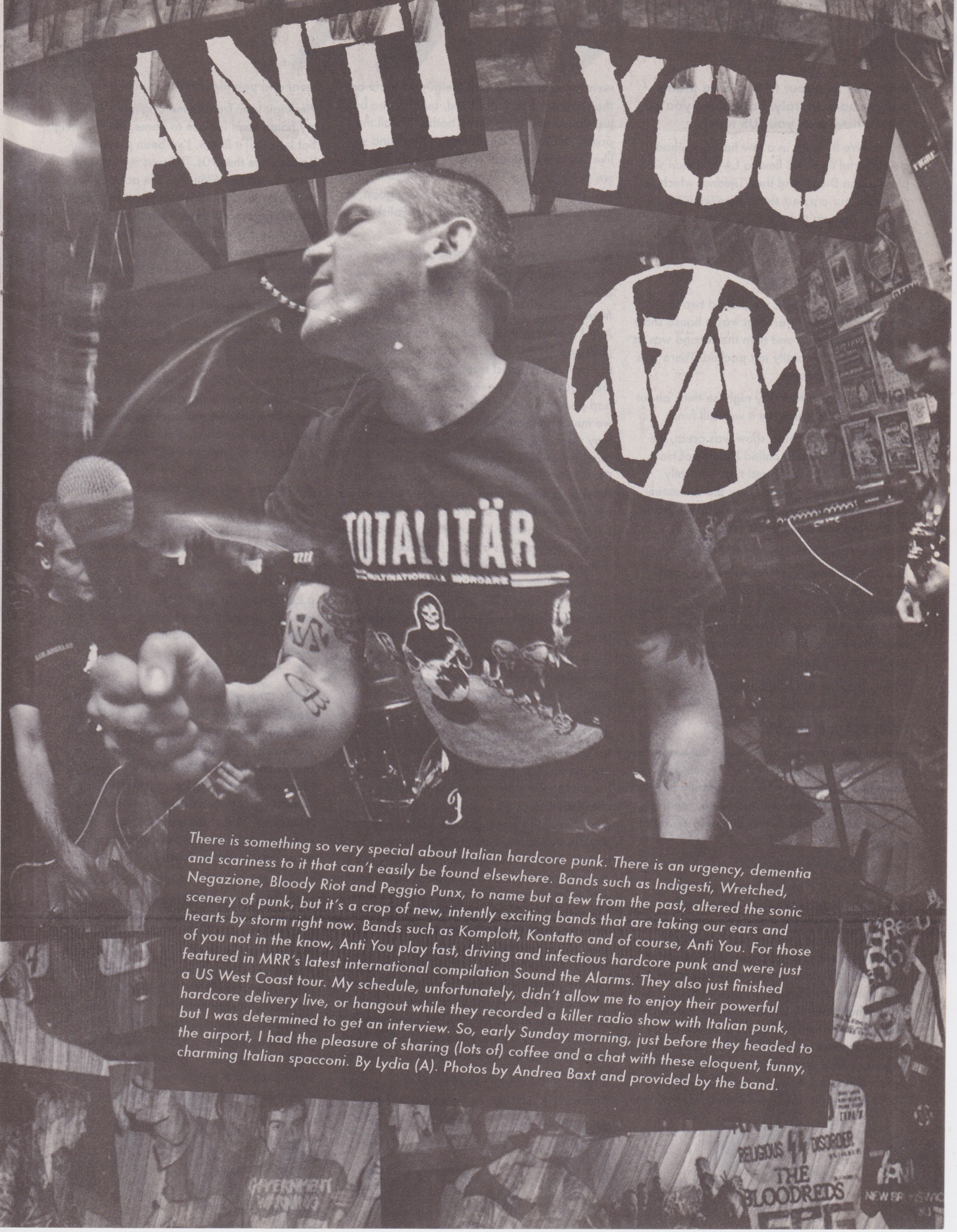


There is something so very special about Italian hardcore punk. There is an urgency, dementia and scariness to it that can't easily be found elsewhere. Bands such as Indigesti, Wretched, Negazione, Bloody Riot and Peggio Punx, to name but a few from the past, altered the sonic scenery of punk, but it's a crop of new, intently exciting bands that are taking our ears and hearts by storm right now. Bands such as Komplott, Kontatto and of course, Anti You. For those of you not in the know, Anti You play fast, driving and infectious hardcore punk and were just featured in MRR's latest international compilation Sound the Alarms. They also just finished a US West Coast tour. My schedule, unfortunately, didn't allow me to enjoy their powerful hardcore delivery live, or hangout while they recorded a killer radio show with Italian punk, but I was determined to get an interview. So, early Sunday morning, just before they headed to the airport, I had the pleasure of sharing (lots of) coffee and a chat with these eloquent, funny, charming Italian spacconi. By Lydia (A). Photos by Andrea Baxt and provided by the band.

MRR: You're about to hop on a plane and fly back to Italy, but before you go, tell us, how was your US tour?

Marco: We fly back in a few hours, we had a wonderful time, we flew to LA and then we played San Diego and then Tijuana, which was probably our craziest show, then we went to Ventura, then up to here [SF]. Where else... Las Vegas!

MRR: How was Vegas?

Paolo: The city is gross, we played two shows, the first in the late afternoon was a house show which was packed, and then the second was at a bar which was totally not packed. There was maybe like 20 people.

Pierluigi: It was a Monday night so think about it, it was not that busy but it was still fun.

Marco: Yeah, the house show was great, we played with this band called Hounds of Hate and there was a local band that we really loved, it was the first one. They did a Descendents cover, I don't remember the name but they were like sixteen years old.

Paolo: I remember, it was Beer Pressure.

Marco: Oh, Beer Pressure. Awesome name. There was a guy who had a Mohawk, he was probably fifteen years old and the singer was very good too. I really loved them. I mean, they totally sounded like an average first band but it was very good.

Paolo: They have a bright future.

MRR: Did you gamble?

Marco: Uh, not really personally. But we were with our friend Nat from Puke'n'Vomit, he's so much into blackjack so he was actually playing blackjack anytime he had like a free five minutes. He was good at it, but he lost a lot of money...

Paolo: He was not so good...

Andrea: I think in general we had a really good time, most of the shows were really good, we met a lot of interesting people and played with some good bands. What I did notice was that in some places there was the typical bullshit that I would expect from scenes where you have the cool person element, you know what I mean? So like the cool bands play and then the next band plays and half of the audience walks outside. This other show we played in Anaheim, we played with two great bands, Generation Suicida and Catholic Spit. It was packed, it was a great show, everything went super smoothly and the guy who put on the show worked super hard, but this one band just flaked and didn't even bother to call the promoter. So he actually called them and was like "what's up guys?" and they were like "Oh, we're not coming." What kind of bullshit is that, you know? But in general it was very good. A cool band that we really liked was Poliskitzo.

MRR: You formed in 2005 and your "base" right now is Roma, but you've already each been in a bunch of bands.

Marco: I was born and raised in Palermo Sicily. And I moved to Rome like ten years ago. My girlfriend lived in the US and then moved back to Rome, so I moved from Sicily to Rome, and these guys had all been friends for years and had been playing in bands and I was too, so we met a few times over the past years and they were like, oh we gotta form a new band together and all that, so it was like game over. Actually Paolo and Pierluigi already had something and me and Andrea just stepped in. But we were friends since back in the day, we all knew each other. The main band I had from back in the day was a band from Sicily, called Semprefreski. It was like straight hardcore punk with a melodic edge, it was cool. We had a couple records out like in the '90s and it was kind of an epic name, in the south of Italy at least.

Paolo: I was in Flu! and in Block of Flats in the late '80s, oh yeah and I played in Porcodio with Brandon and Kenny from Government Warning.

Andrea: So I was actually born in a city called Bari, which is in southern Italy. When I was a few months old, my dad got posted abroad, he used to work for this airline company so we traveled around a bit and I lived in different countries until I was eighteen. I discovered punk in Venezuela actually—then I moved back to Italy when I was eighteen in late '91. I've played in a bunch of bands, like Comrades that was more like powerviolence, fast hardcore grindy stuff. A band called DIE!, which was more like traditional US hardcore type stuff. Then Notorius in the '90s, which was more like the whole VSS-like strange Gravity records trip. And actually my first band in Rome was a metalcore band, which sucked to me, but you know, I wanted to play. My first band was in Venezuela and we were called Solo Por Diversion, which means "just for fun."

Marco: What did you guys play?

Andrea: Oh, just like hardcore punk. Basic meat and potatoes hardcore punk.

Pierluigi: I am from Rome originally. Basically, my home town is close to Rome, like 100 miles, but let's call it Rome. I've been playing in bands since the '90s, '94 was my first band, we were called This Side Up. We actually toured the states in 1999. It was a coast to coast tour, like 40 gigs in 40 days, something like that, it was quite a good experience I would have to say. And then I kept playing in a few other, mostly local bands, then I started something with Paolo, just playing covers, you know classic hardcore covers. Then we called Marco and Andrea to form this new band because none of us were playing in other bands and we were all unemployed.

Paolo: Yes our other bands were just over and we were like, let's play some covers you know, like as friends, we were not even thinking about doing a serious band. Then we ended up meeting these two guys who had so many fucking contacts all around the world. It happened, we just became serious by playing and not even wanting to.

Pierluigi: And actually I went on tour with Andrea in 1996, it was a two-band tour, it was my band This Side Up and one of his many bands which was called Bruma, and we had a European tour in December of '96 I think it was. Uh, so yeah we all knew each other basically from the scene and that's how the band started.

MRR: One of your records was on the classic US label Six Weeks, and also another on the classic European label Agipunk. People have compared your music to classic USHC bands, like Black Flag and Circle Jerks, others have mentioned Career Suicide and Government Warning. What do you think of these comparisons and where would you say your music stems from?

Marco: Oh. Uh. OK. This last record came out in like two runs of 500 each, one on Six Week Records, and the European press out on Mila's label, Agipunk. For hardcore record collectors, the only complicated single is probably the Puke'n'Vomit single one. The Johnny Baghdad single Nat pressed like 1,000 copies, but he has this silkscreen machine in the back of his store and he prints a lot of stuff, he does this for a living I guess. So there's like three or four covers for that and a green vinyl edition. The seven inch on No Way records came out on a colored vinyl edition. The only hard to find one

is the Punks Before Profits single which came out in like 500 copies: the Pig City Life single, that one is tough to find.

As far as comparisons go, we hated that, you know of course we were influenced by old classic USHC and of course we have local influences, like classic Italian hardcore we grew up with. But the thing is everything comes up naturally. We do one thing that is called Provolone (the Italian word for rehearsal is "prova"), which is like, we don't have much time to rehearse back home, we all have jobs and kids and family and stuff. When we want to record new songs we have a huge rehersal where we have a rule where every riff has to come up with a song, then the thing is we alienate the songs that we don't like, but we still have to get to one point, so this rehersal is usually like six hours long. And we call it Provolone, which is like a big rehearsal, besides being the name of a kind of cheese. So in one day we write like 25 songs and then we eliminate a bunch of those and then the record comes out. So we have our natural influences of course, but this is just our natural and casual way.

Pierluigi: It's just what we can play, what comes natural for us to play; we don't really plan to sound like this or like that. We play some riffs and we make them fast and we throw some breaks here or there and that's our songs.

Marco: On every record there are some super weird songs that we are not even able to play live.

Paolo: I couldn't figure out a way to say to you guys like, let's play this type of music, I totally don't know, it's all like improvising. Andrea takes some time to write lyrics so...

Marco: Yeah, sometimes we go to record an LP and we have no idea what the lyrics are.

Paolo: Some of the songs end up sounding a little more smooth than the others, and it was "The Elegant One." Another one sounded like Indigesti, it was called "Indigesti." So we have songs that end up on the set list with the fake name because we remember it better than the real name.

MRR: What other types of music do you listen, besides hardcore punk? Does it influence you in any way?

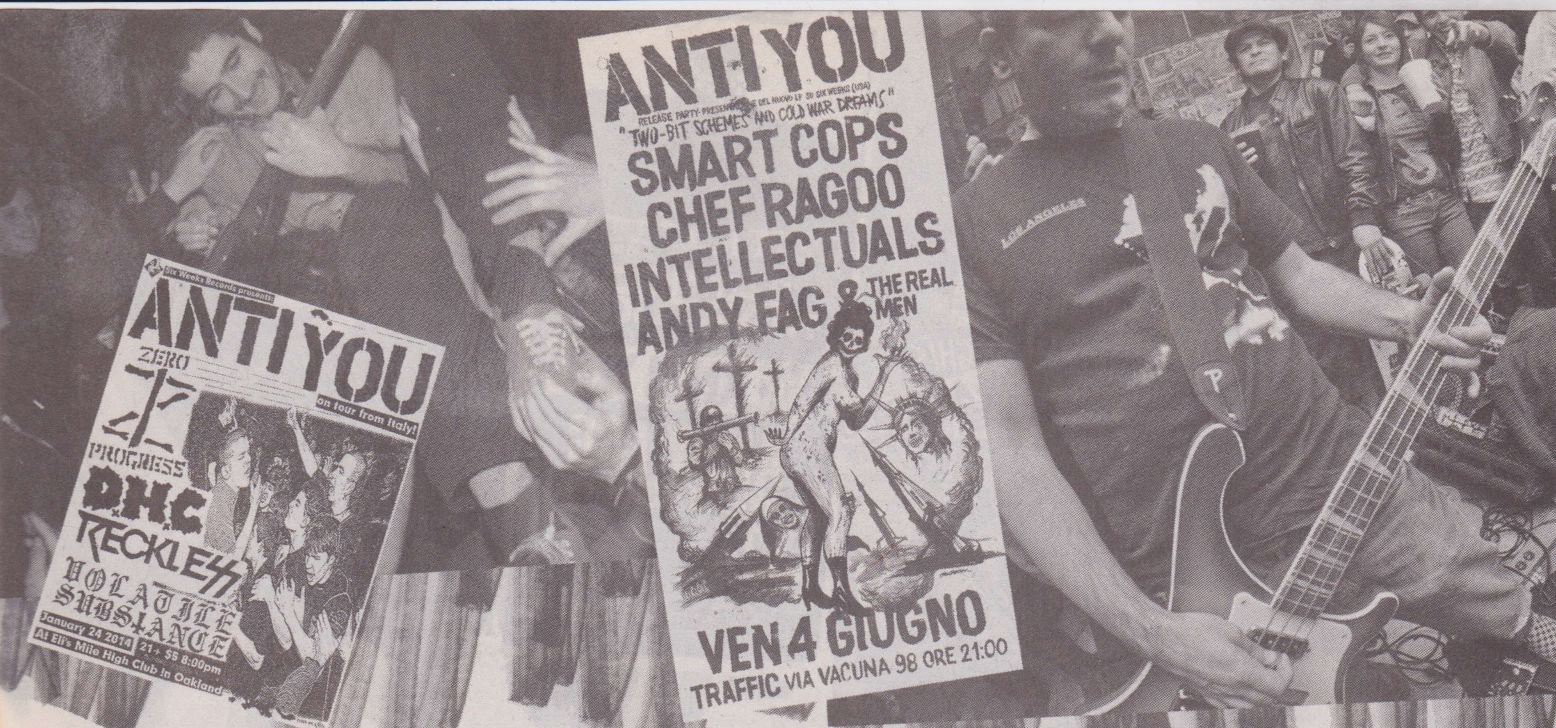
Marco: I do listen to a lot of stuff. I have a record store back home and a label. I do reissues of a lot of stuff, some punk too. So I get to listen to a lot of music, I listen to music for a living, almost fourteen hours a day. I grew up with punk and hardcore but I also grew up with a lot of hip-hop and high quality indie rock. I also like a lot of blues music, country and folk, prewar blues all that kind of stuff. I have a huge record collection and I really love listening to music and I make a living out of it, and I don't regret anything about it.

Andrea: I guess I mostly listen to punk bands still, even though I don't have that much time to listen to the records because I'm married and have two kids, so it gets a little complicated, hence the ring I wear. But I just keep buying records and I specifically go out and look for new bands, because that's what interests me the most, besides all the old classics. But I'm really interested in hearing new bands, so I have this big stack of records and it just keeps getting bigger, but I guess I'll get round to listening to them at some point. I feel like the older I've gotten the uglier my musical taste has gotten; like I keep wanting to hear rawer and harsher stuff. I'm definitely going harder. But just getting back to your previous question I think most of the records just came about through connections through the scene. That Pig City Life single came about because we played with Ryan's old band in Rome.

Marco: They came over to Rome, liked our band and said, "oh I'm going to make a seven inch for you guys." And then he booked a whole tour. He did a lot of stuff for us, we are thankful to that guy. The same thing happened with Six Weeks Records; we had been trading records for years and they were distributing our singles, so when the LP was ready I thought they might be interested and they were like, yeah sure.

Andrea: Yeah and the No Way Records story is funny, that came about because we met them on Myspace, which is dead now, but those were the years when No Way Records was putting out like a ton of stuff, all great stuff and they knew us from our previous single. So Brandon and Lauren, who were into that USHC revival thing, just got in touch with us and were like, you wanna do a record with us? And I said, yes of course, because they were putting out some really solid releases, had a good reputation, good people.

Marco: Yeah, we played in Richmond and that



was probably the wildest show we had back then. We played at a sushi bar called Nara Sushi with Government Warning and a bunch of other bands; it was a great show.

Paolo: I mean some friendships ended up lasting long there. I ended up going back to Richmond and Richmond friends came and stayed at my house in Rome.

MRR: Back home [Athens, GR], before the whole internet thing exploded it wasn't very easy to find hardcore and punk records unless you visited a record store, or contacted a distro or traded them yourself. Having been around the block a couple times, how important do you think physical space is in an age when everyone's (punk) life is online? Do you think people are still invested in making real things happen in real life?

Marco: I think it's still happening, after the whole internet revolution of course some things are a lot easier to reach and that might make them seem less valuable. Not only like rare records, where you can type the name in eBay and buy it in five seconds while in the pre-internet days you'd have to look for it for years. Also connections with bands were harder, but the thing is, if you use the internet it can be a good thing, it just has to be a means and not an end. If you use it to get to things you need it's 100 times faster than it was fifteen, twenty years ago and that makes sense. If your life has to be there because there is where all the communities are and you have a second life there, then that sucks.

Paolo: Oh, I don't know I'm totally addicted, I'm addicted to Facebook so I don't have a life any more. But I think socially wise it's interesting, it developed a new way of meeting people and making friends. I think culturally, and mostly in these underground cultures, it's problematic because you get all the stuff that you want and you don't give the right importance to each step that you're doing towards getting to know the music that you want to know. You get 2,000 records in a day and what's the value in that? When you have to search for a specific record because you want to listen to it, you've never heard it, you've just heard someone talk about it that makes every experience of listening to it so fucking valuable. I don't think it's like that anymore, but socially it's valuable. I live on Facebook.

Marco: My older band in Sicily was far from everything. And when we booked a tour we toured a lot, we were young and we toured a lot. When we booked a tour we all got together in a phone booth and called people with coins. So actually the route we toured might have been depending on who actually answered the phone or not. Of course we're talking about house phones and not cell phones, so it was like 50% yes and 50% no and that was how we booked a tour. So I can't say that it was better back then because it was not, whoever says that it was lies. But still it's very important to use the internet rather than become a part of it.

MRR: How you feel about all the whole "punk's not dead" / punk revival thing the mainstream media caught on to in the last couple years, given that to people like you and MRR punk has always been alive and kicking?

Andrea: As far as a punk revival is concerned, I think there has always been a punk revival. It's always coming in circles you know. I'm thinking that in the early '90s some people would say that Nirvana was kinda like punk revival. I don't have a problem with that necessarily, I think it's totally great to have documents about the old bands and the old zines and the people who were in it from day one. It's cool, it's inspiring. Having said that, again, I'm interested in new bands, to me new bands are more important than going out and looking for the crazy rare obscure band from the '80s. So as long as you understand that the important thing is what's happening now, because punk is supposed to be about now, then having documents about the old times is perfectly okay, I don't care.

Marco: There're a lot of opinions sometimes that we fight between us about. They call us and are say, hey you guys wanna open for these old guys who just got back together? He's against opening for reunion shows most

of the time and I'm totally okay with it, but not because I like it a lot. I understand that it is an issue to be discussed. My opinion is that it is just a matter of time, thirty years have passed, it's a generational thing, it has come full circle. So these people, either for good reason or money, or whatever need they felt to get back on stage again. In a month I get to see the Sonics, the Misfits and Black Flag. The only thing that makes a difference is that when I grew up the Misfits were a legend, the Descendents were a legend. I had to imagine how it would be back in the day. You may find videos or very few pictures but most of it you had to imagine. They were myths. What are these names to the kids nowadays? Some sixty-year-olds trying to have fun on stage, it's completely different. How could I explain to my daughter one day how cool it was back then? You know, just imagine seeing the Misfits in 1982! I don't know, that's the only thing that I think is completely different. The whole punk reunion debate is completely useless, it will always be there, we will probably be doing that in twenty years. I'm sure that back in the day they didn't think it would happen, they were pretty sure they were gonna die in like five years. If you're a kid today you get to see all the bands that were just legends to you when we grew up. It's gonna happen, thirty years have passed, the Circle Jerks are on stage again, but that's just one slice of the cake.

Pierluigi: To me it's just them getting their piece of the cake. They realized that after twenty years they actually had an influence. And when they realize that they said, yeah let's get back together. And after all that, maybe they deserve that. I was very happy when I saw the Adolescents for the first time five years ago, and they deserved that because they had an influence on me, so that's fine. Maybe they got back together for one reunion tour just to get their piece of cake.

MRR: During turbulent times, society often polarizes. I remember reading about the Casa Pound, the "fascist social centre" in Rome. Do you have fascists trying to pose as "independent" and "punk?" How do politics and punk collide in Italy?

Paolo: There's a punk radio station called Radio Bandiera Nera, which is actually Black Flag radio, and they had a show with punk music on it and they put out a flyer on the internet with Ian MacKaye and used his image to promote punk to fascists.

Marco: They used Fabrizio DeAndre, who is like an anarchist singer songwriter from the '70s and '80s and they made like a tribute to him. They tried to steal...

Paolo: They came to the Misfits concert and waited until a fight started; they obviously provoked it. They came to the Dropkick Murphy's show and there was trouble there.

Andrea: They come to the big shows.

Paolo: They came to Sick of it All and Madball.

Marco: Yeah, they go to these kinds of shows. But to answer your question they have no idea what DIY punk is, they have no idea.

Paolo: Marco Mathieu the bass player of Negazione wrote a book about Casa Pound and actually spent months with the guys of Casa Pound, and what he was saying is that they basically envy us because we built a lot of shit and they never did; they were stuck on their traditional ways and their slogans have been the same since the '50s. So they try to do something that they like but that they've never been a part of.

Marco: They might make them look better than they actually are. They are just a bunch of puppets; they have big guys behind them that just want to get to power.

Paolo: Sooner or later they are gonna get to a big party.

Andrea: We're not talking about the numbers that you have in Greece with Golden Dawn or in Hungary. These guys actually try to take part in elections but they get like 0.0-something percent. That's not the issue. They're thugs, they're very organized, they're not so much a threat in the political scene, they are more of a threat culturally or in the street. They're thugs. They actually have this whole nationalist-socialist hardcore scene, they call it like NSHC.

Paolo: Yeah, most of the time punk and hardcore in Europe and Italy happens in squats, which are rooted in politics. So there's no fucking way a fascist is gonna come do his thing in a squat. I mean, if somebody wants to look totally anonymous he could probably do that, but you can't just come and Sieg Heil in the fucking squat.

MRR: Yes indeed, the Italian punk scene is very political compared to others. Are you having trouble with squats being shut down?

Paolo: Nick Tape of Cokebust after a European tour told me that anti-fascism in Europe is stickers. And in a way we are kind of like that.

I mean we are political but there is not much activity besides squatting and living there and going to a rally here and there, not that much is happening. So I wouldn't say that we are as active as '77 or the mid '80s.

Marco: The squat scene is not as active as it used to be. The whole geography of the squatting scene in Europe is a lot steadier than it was 20 years ago. There are squats that have been around for decades now. So yeah, Paolo is probably right, there's not as much activity as there used to be but the European hardcore scene will always be connected to politics.

Pierluigi: It's always been more political, but at a certain point it got stuck. So yes, we have nice slogans and symbols and whatever. It became a cultural thing more than an active thing. It's still radical but there's just not as much being done.

MRR: Do you think that's because of government pressure, or do you think the scene itself is getting idler?

Pierluigi: I think it's from the scene.

Paolo: And also the social changes that we were talking about before, like the internet. You make a page on the internet that says, "we are opposed to this and that" and that's your political activity, it ends there. It's kinda ridiculous at times. I didn't live the early '80s scene anyway, I got into it a little bit later, but my idolization of that period was that all those punks were super active and a lot of those guys lost their minds on it. It took a lot of time and energy and was sometimes overwhelming. So I don't know, I have an idea about how it was in the past and maybe it's wrong but I don't see it that way. I don't see it now. I don't see the idea I have of Italian hardcore punk back in the day applying to the scene that is right now.

Marco: Not necessarily in a bad way. Things changed a lot over the years. In Italy there are a few instances of bad street riots that might deter someone. But on the other hand, languages and things change so much. But the squat scene is still alive and active.

MRR: Are any of the older bands reuniting or still around and active?

Paolo: No, Kina was the only one that never split up but they did last year, they called it quits.

Marco: Indigesti had a reunion tour last year in Italy, and they're actually back together in a steady way. I don't know, we'll see. And Bloody Riot is still playing, they'll probably never stop. Peggio Punx did a couple reunion shows. EU's Arse are coming over to the US to tour. Those people are still alive and kicking.

Paolo: The only ones we are gonna say won't reunite are Negazione and Wretched, and CCM I guess. That will never happen.

Marco: Never say never.

MRR: To wrap up, we won't discuss football, because Americans won't care. Instead, Marco, tell us a little bit about your record store, any future plans that are coming up, any bands or collectives, activities we should know about?

Marco: Okay, I run a record store called Radiation Records. You guys know it, we've been in touch forever since I distribute the magazine… We also have a label called Radiation Reissues that puts out old punk classics on vinyl. What else can I mention? What's going on in Rome right now?

Pierluigi: I moved to London a few months ago, so I'm new to the scene there. I would actually like to start a band there but I'm working so we'll see how it goes.

Marco: There's another thing worth mentioning, which is Mila's label Agipunk, we are very proud that our latest record is out on his label. We think it's the best label in Europe and we think they are doing great, so if you ever need a tour in Europe and a van and a backline they are the way to go!

MRR: Anything else you'd like to say to Maximum readers?

Andrea: Hey, we love you guys, I've been reading the magazine since I was a little kid so it's pretty cool to meet you guys and be in the Maximum Rocknroll house. I like the fact that even though the people change, the spirit stays the same. It's cool.

Marco: I really liked this magazine, it was really hard to find in Italy, and a subscription was really hard to do. A subscription to MRR was a gift from my girlfriend, it was for my seventeenth birthday; we are still together.

Andrea: Also check out Mila's new band, Komplott.

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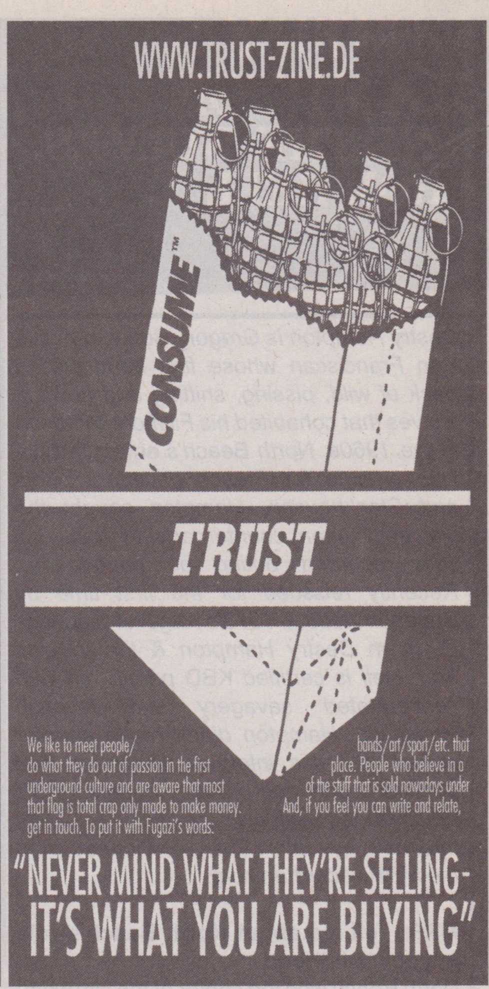

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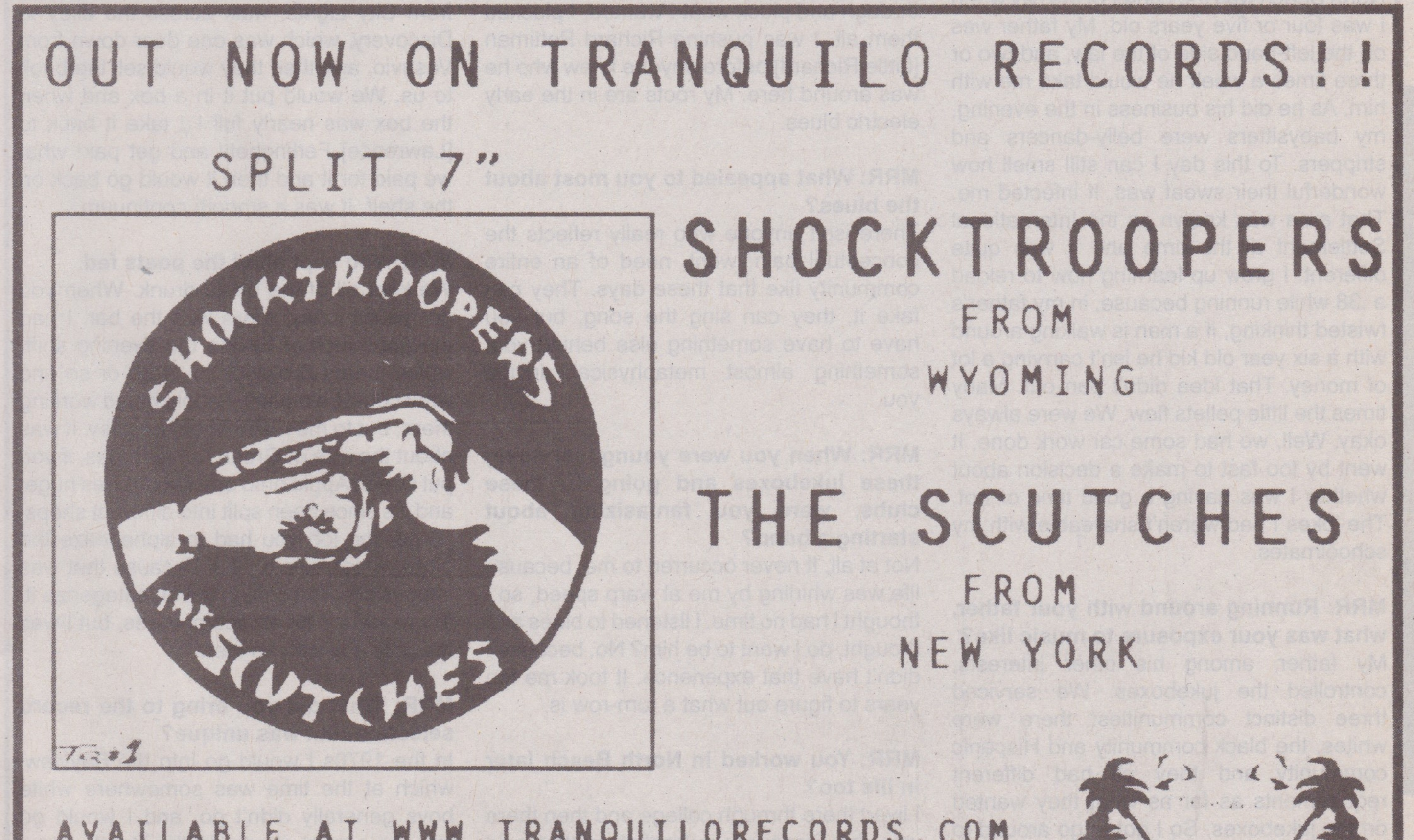

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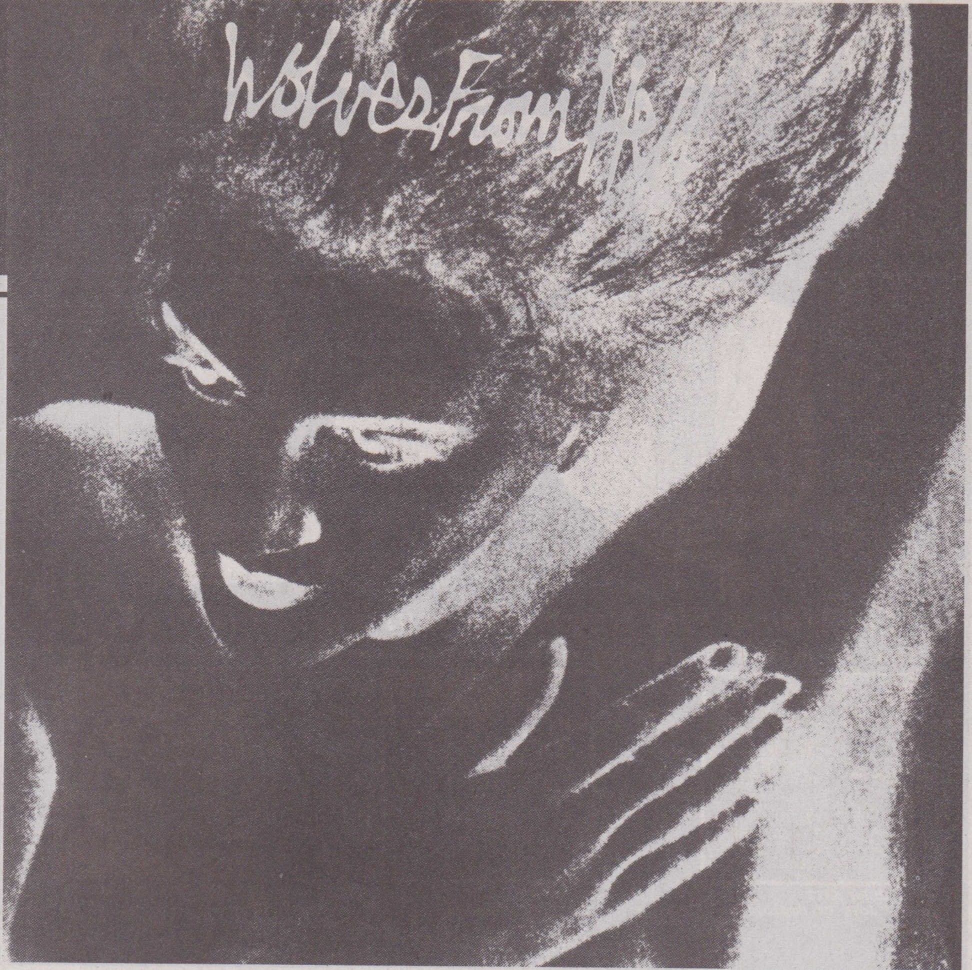
DESTRY HAMPTON AND THE WOLVES FROM HELL



Destry Hampton is Gregory Burke, a native San Franciscan whose first band was a pack of wild, pissing, shitting and howling wolves that cohabited his Fillmore Victorian in the 1960s. North Beach's enfant terrible *with a taste for French decadent poets and Stockhausen, Hampton sought the wolves' human counterparts to track his sole recorded outing as band-leader. Recently reissued for the first time by Superior Viaduct, 1978's* Angel of Madness *EP from Destry Hampton & the Wolves from Hell is certified* KBD *prime, rife with concentrated savagery and feverish invectives. Hampton didn't make another record, but this interview illustrates that punk was only one of many outlets for his brash transgressions.*
Interview by Sam Lefebvre. Pictures from the MRR *record archive.*

MRR: Tell me about North Beach's role in your childhood.
North Beach was the center of the city when I was four or five years old. My father was on the left-hand side of the law, and two or three times a week he would take me with him. As he did his business in the evening, my babysitters were belly-dancers and strippers. To this day I can still smell how wonderful their sweat was. It infected me. That area was known as the International Settlement at the time and it was quite different. I grew up learning how to reload a .38 while running because, in my father's twisted thinking, if a man is walking around with a six year old kid he isn't carrying a lot of money. That idea didn't pan out. Many times the little pellets flew. We were always okay. Well, we had some car work done. It went by too fast to make a decision about whether I was having a good time or not. The jokes I had weren't shareable with my schoolmates.

MRR: Running around with your father, what was your exposure to music like?
My father, among his other interests, controlled the jukeboxes. We serviced three distinct communities: there were whites, the black community and Hispanic community and they all had different requirements as far as what they wanted on the jukeboxes. So I got to go around to these clubs servicing jukeboxes, and go to a warehouse with a wall full of 45s for all of the clubs. I had the right just to walk through and pluck what I wanted. I plucked them all. I was pushing Richard Pettiman [Little Richard] before anyone knew who he was around here. My roots are in the early electric blues.

MRR: What appealed to you most about the blues?
There isn't anyone who really reflects the conceptual pain, wont, need of an entire community like that these days. They can fake it, they can sing the song, but you have to have something else behind you, something almost metaphysical driving you.

MRR: When you were young, servicing these jukeboxes and going to these clubs, were you fantasizing about starting a band?
Not at all. It never occurred to me, because life was whirling by me at warp speed, so I thought I had no time. I listened to blues and thought, do I want to be him? No, because I didn't have that experience. It took me ten years to figure out what a turn-row is.

MRR: You worked in North Beach later in life too?
I lived there through college and then there was the Discovery, a bookstore that sold records. It was the obverse side of City Lights. Somebody would steal something from City Lights, walk across the alley to Discovery, which was one door down from Vesuvio, and then they would sell the book to us. We would put it in a box and when the box was nearly full I'd take it back to [Lawrence] Ferlinghetti and get paid what we paid for it and then it would go back on the shelf. It was a smooth continuum.

MRR: You kept all of the poets fed.
We kept all of the poets drunk. When you got your money, there was the bar. I had the good luck of having the evening shift, which meant 6 o'clock to 11:30 or so and what could be better? People hated working there, but to me it was sheer ecstasy. It was about the size of Green Apple Books, if you put Green Apple onto one floor. It was huge, and it's since been split into different shops. To get the job you had to alphabetize the store, which was a joke, because that was impossible. You couldn't even categorize it. There were a lot of record stores, but I was the only guy with an idea.

MRR: What did you bring to the record selection that was unique?
In the 1970s I would go into the Bayview, which at the time was somewhere white boys generally didn't go, and I would go into the record stores. In the South, there has always been a thriving business in bootlegging blues records, so I would go to

the record dealers and get those wonderful records. It just kept expanding, record-wise, and then I noticed a lot of suspicious characters hanging around between the poetry and record boxes. It would go [through the records], Moby Grape, Moby Grape, Moby Grape, then, ah, one of these miraculous Southern records on a label like Memphis Belle. At that point a lot of people started to pick up on blues and jazz because you had gentrification moving in, so beatniks were moving out. Guys would come in with original jazz records and tube equipment before they moved.

MRR: Did you sell punk records too?

One evening, a guy walks in and says—to this day I don't know his name—he says, "My name is blah blah, and I'm from Akron, Ohio and if you don't mind I'd like to leave you some records." They were the first pressings of Devo and Pere Ubu and he left me about twenty of each. I asked what he wanted me to do with them, or if he wanted money. Bands like Crime would be dropping off records for free all of the time, just to get someone to listen. I took the bulk of the handful over to Chris [Knabb] at Aquarius Records on Castro St. and about two bars into "Mongoloid" he said he'd take 'em all. At that point I knew something was going on because the records were perfect for ending parties.

MRR: Before the Wolves from Hell, you were beginning to experiment with electronic music and performance art too?

A rich guy, who shall remain nameless, rented a storefront and had some installations. Those were the early days of what you'd call minimalism, when you'd take a rock and put it in the middle of the floor and that was it. We got some bleachers, announced a show and I made up a soundtrack from fragments of different things, using VHS because of the bigger tape size after I read that Stockhausen had done it. I'm a big copy-cat of his. I ran an ad asking for beautiful left wing women and dwarves, and we got them all! We filled the place up, turned out all of the lights and passed around snacks, which were actually animal eyeballs, and everybody had their own light fixture. We had this long concocted story to present and as it got near the end, we had somebody prepared to call the police and say there was an unauthorized gathering. The police were delighted to show up. At the moment we learned that they were about to come bursting through the door, the house was still dark and we were playing our perverted sounds. It was all assaultive words and sounds directed at the audience. As the police gathered outside, we set off a double line of firecrackers underneath the risers. So they all jumped up screaming and ran out of the door and collided with the police. They tried to arrest us but we had an attorney there who explained that it wasn't a performance, it was a rehearsal, and we just agreed not to do it again. There were maybe eleven or twelve shows like that. Personally, I was altering the speed of known recordings and making 20-minute stories, shooting video, then putting up five or ten monitors. To get a Moog to sound like an electric guitar you have to go very fast.

I was involved in an early Moog studio too, and I can't say I liked it very much because it was like a giant phone exchange, an entire room of things to plug in. Now it's a guitar pedal fer chrissake'. I loved fast response so I would find myself using the Theremin more.

In my teens, I was going to school and working at the ballrooms and then I bought a Bolex 16 millimeter camera. I would go to the parks and photograph beautiful dancing girls in slow motion. I've always lived communally with a gang. The girls in the gang started a lightshow that was well received called Heavy Water. They toured with the Dead, Airplane, Santana, and all of the bands that were important to them at the time. I helped them do the same thing. I called up the people who supplied the movie projectors, like the FBI. Everything was so archaic by today's standards, but it was a projector with a cooling device so you could slow it down frame by frame.

MRR: How did you assemble the Wolves from Hell?

When I was in North Beach, I found I was living with your diehard hippies, a few punkoid rockers, who were mostly ostracized due to their wild drug use, and so I found a group of guys that I had known off and on. Initially they were roadies for the Heavy Water light show and they themselves were morphing into a band. They lived on Hattie St. and went by the Hot Knives. Michael [Houpt] and I were just working with my words and his guitar. Down the street was this big heavy metal house, across the street from the Mabuhay [Gardens], so there were a lot of musicians hanging around. A bass player started coming in and we started drinking at my breaks, which were about half my shift. That was Bill [Ashlee]. He came over to the house and we did some thumping. I found that he was real intuitive. The rhythm guitarist came from somewhere, he was trying to get into a hair band but he owned his own equipment. We actually had a different drummer before Danny [Mihm, of Flamin' Groovies fame], whom I liked because he was polyrhythmic. That doesn't mean he could speak French. He was a jazz drummer.

MRR: What was the recording session like?

I noticed that these record companies would give these bands a month in these luxurious studios, where they would bring girls and drugs and play "Louie Louie" a few times and go home you know. It blew me away. I would say that the Wolves from Hell record was made in a week. We borrowed the money to make it. It went this way: I work with words, more like Gil-Scott Heron or something. I don't rhyme. My heart is in lost beatnik hand. Bob Kaufman was close. I always liked Mayakovsky. I liked Rimbaud, his attitude. I didn't steal words, but the attitude is there. I'm the guy who scribbles on the cocktail napkin and shoves it in his pocket. One day they all come together. I have been falsely accused of being abrasive—to which I plead absolutely guilty. My idea is to jar folks out of their bloatitude [sic].

I believe that the bottom end leads my stuff. Bill would start with a low thump and I would start reading the words like an old beatnik and the other guys would just try to find it. Within a day or two they would be done and they could be played at any velocity, so it was done utterly live and then my voice was overdubbed. The reason I'm telling you all of my secrets is because I want other people to do it. It was mixed with everything in the red. Then, Bobby Kinney came in and laid that center noise down the middle, just like scoring a movie. He listened and worked with us then came in alone—because he didn't want anyone telling him what to do—and he did what he did.

MRR: What about the manufacturing and art? The Man Ray image on the cover is incredible.

Well, next up was then Dave [Gibson, at Moxie Records] to try to get it cut. Dave said he couldn't cut it. The needle on the lathe kept jumping off of the acetate. It was too bright. He said he just couldn't do it. So I went to LA and told him his problem was lack of imagination. I scotch taped a dime to the head of the lathe and that worked just fine.

When I got the covers done, I went to where everybody went, which was Cal Litho and they did it for free. They just liked the idea. I told them to mis-register the colors on the text. They said, "Oh you want us to fuck it up?" which delighted them so they did crazy runs in all different ways. The jackets are a bizarre work of art themselves.

MRR: What were you looking for in collaborators?

A very important thing I noticed about the guys who participated in it: nobody got paid, nobody cared, they all considered themselves doomed in an Artaud kind of way and when they showed up there was never any joking. It was like a small group of mercenaries showing up for a job they owed somebody.

MRR: Is that how a band should be?

Yeah, when they work with me. I wore 'em out. We worked all day. It came not just from me, but it came out of a hatred of something.

MRR: Is hatred the theme of the record?

Yes, and after the record, to be frank, I just ran out of hatred. You only have so much hatred. It's like a guy who goes to war. He does what he came there for, and when the blood is on the ground and dried, that's it for a while. The cocktail napkins are back up to here again, though. I have some ideas; I have some discomforts that I need to get off of my chest.

MRR: Why did you name the band the Wolves from Hell?

Well I have a long background working with animals. I've had very odd jobs, from agriculture to high tech. There used to be an animal holding area and auto dismantling yard in Hayward. I used to work there and my forte was wolves. Believe it or not, the zoos have a sort of fair trade agreement between each other. Like, if I have an extra hippo and I want to sell it, it's got to have a set price for other zoos. While that's happening they're kept in holding areas like the one I worked at. Every once in a while an animal would die and they'd put it up on an engine a-frame, cut it up with a torch and then feed it to the others. I used to work with all of these wolves. If they bore a litter while in holding, it wasn't entered into the inventory, so there would be five free wolves and they would end up at my house. Luckily I had a house in the Fillmore with a double lot. It was a Victorian and another house used to sit behind it that burnt down. So I had this huge, jungle-ish yard and the wolves fit right in. There are many funny stories—you take them out and they eat leather accessories off of people and what not. That was before the average person knew what a wolf looked like. You see one now and know it's not a German shepherd. I lived with them for a number of years at the end of the 1960s. There was always a zoo or Indian tribe that wanted them, because they're totemic to the Lakota, who I became friendly with. I still have some puncture marks. When people started to tell me I was acting like them, I smelled like them and I was getting animalistic, I started to let them go. When we had the band I thought of myself as an animal handler. They were violent guys. They had a negative view of the world. I was lucky enough to get guys with a negative view. That's where the Wolves from Hell came from. When they walked in to make the record they had completely assimilated the attitude of wolves.

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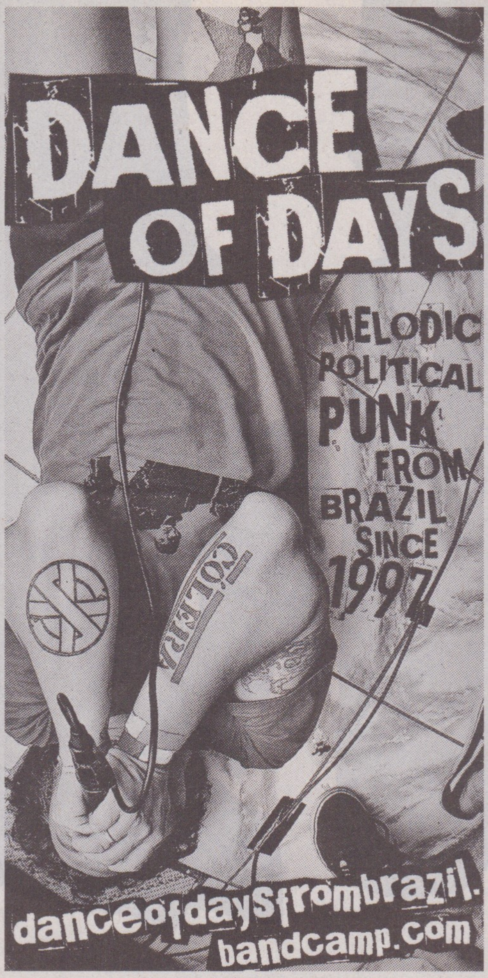
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Not too long after I first started school here in Urbana-Champaign, a few of my newfound dorm friends and I headed out to see Chicago's own bearded math-rock stars MAPS AND ATLASES. Also billed on the show, as local support, was a band called HANK. I don't remember that much about their actual set, but I remember my friends hating it, how just unruly it was, and thinking, "Wow there's some wicked awesome music going on here." I've seen HANK. tighten up their live performance since then, transitioning from being a bunch of rowdy kids drooling on their math homework to a band of musicians in sync with each other and with what they want from their music. What was chaos before is now the pleasantly disorienting feeling you get from listening to HANK. The album they released over the summer (on some sweet translucent green vinyl, I might add) pretty much contains all of their work to date and is an unpredictable math-punk rollercoaster through the band's history, playfully juxtaposing atmospheric sounds with poignant, tapped-out riffs, singing with screaming, and musical talent with raw enthusiasm. HANK. are now beginning to record other bands in their basement studio and are looking to release a 10" record in the near future. I sat down with the band before their winter Midwest tour with CAPYS to talk about favorite gig stories, what they think of twinkly emo fans and covering Korn for charity.

Interview and photographs by Maddie Rehayem.

HANK. is: Teddy Lerch – guitar / vox Darwin Keüp – bass / vox
Nelson Cowan – drumsRyan Brewer – guitar / vox / everything else

MRR: Are you stoked for the tour with CAPYS?
Teddy: Severely.
Darwin: Actually, most of the shows we're playing are house shows, and we told the promoter just to book a party and we'll play it, so this is literally just gonna be that party, bro-down tour.

MRR: You've been mostly playing bars lately.
Darwin: We've been playing more venues and things like that. We've been wanting to get a better sound because there're a lot of stuff going on with our music, so we're trying to make it clear, but you've gotta go back to your roots, I guess.
Nelson: Or just play the most fun shows.
Darwin: This is really just gonna be a fun tour for us. Don't get me wrong, bars are fun to play…
Teddy: But nothing can really compare to the homey feeling of a house show.
Darwin: Like when the people you're playing for are literally a foot away from you.
Nelson: And you bring your own beer.

MRR: Can you describe the scene HANK. grew out of?
Nelson: We went on tour really early and that made us play a lot of basement shows and stuff like that, so we just got used to that. Places like Kansas City. That influenced us a lot as far as the kind of shows that we like to play.
Teddy: In Kansas City, the Mannheim—it's condemned now—there was someone creating meth in one of the rooms, legitimately, and they shut down the house.
Darwin: We played a meth lab.
Teddy: We played the Math Lab and the meth lab.

MRR: Do you prefer the meth lab or the Math Lab (clarification: this is a house venue in Champaign)?
Teddy: The meth lab was actually pretty fucking cool.
Darwin: It was pretty fuckin' rad.
Teddy: I had to live at the Math Lab, so I definitely prefer

playing at the meth lab.

Darwin: I remember at the end of the show they kicked over the meth lab door-room-thing, and they were just bashing all the stuff that this dude owned, but the best thing I remember is there was this giant can of peas, like, an econo-sized thing that you would go to Sam's Club to get, and they were just picking up and just smashing things with this can of peas. And then we got the fuck out of there.

MRR: When you first started playing as Hank. did you take it as seriously as you do now?

Teddy: Not whatsoever. We probably wouldn't have called ourselves HANK.

Darwin: I think when we started our original name was almost Hometown Heroes.

Teddy: No, it was never almost that, it was just a suggestion.

Darwin: Well, Dan (Lee) really wanted to be Hometown Heroes, and we were just like, "Bro, we're not a grocery store."

Teddy: At that point none of us had ever toured before.

Nelson: We were all playing really different styles of music.

Darwin: Nelson was really big into deathcore, I was really into rock'n'roll.

Teddy: I was into weird math rock and local hardcore mostly.

Nelson: Well, we all kind of listened to math rock at the same time. That was kind of what made us make sense.

Darwin: Dan was a "twinkle daddy," but he didn't really listen to math rock at all.

Nelson: At the time it was basically the same thing.

Teddy: We started to move into more math directions after he left.

Nelson: It was more the counting exercises.

Darwin: Yeah, it really was. He couldn't keep up with the counting. We've become more serious, but honestly now that we're at the point where we are now, it's just second nature. I take it seriously, but I don't freak out if something doesn't exactly happen.

Teddy: It's not more serious. We just try and be as efficient as possible when it comes to writing and playing.

Darwin: We take it seriously. It's just that it's what we do now as opposed to what we were trying to do.

Teddy: We never want to take ourselves too seriously. There's no way that Darwin and I could take each other too seriously.

Darwin: We can't. Look at me.

MRR: What's a "twinkle daddy?"

Darwin: A twinkle daddy is someone who's obsessed with third-wave Midwest emo revival. It's the most elitist term ever, like, a band that would be considered "twinkle daddy" is JOIE DEVIVRE, EMPIRE EMPIRE (I WAS A LONELY ESTATE), SNOWING, THE WORLD IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE (AND I AM NO LONGER AFRAID TO DIE)… early WORLD IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE, now they're just like this weird post-cry band.

Teddy: When I think of "twinkle-daddy," which I don't often, I

just think it's referring to how the guitar is played. Really up high and sort of noodly.
Darwin: Cardigans.
Nelson: Entry-level math. Things that add up to four at the end of the day. It's like playing a riff in four and then playing it in five but only doing one more chord.
Darwin: First you play 3/4 then you play 5/4.
Nelson: But it's the same riff, essentially.
Darwin: But it's all 8/8.

MRR: What differentiates HANK. from that?
Teddy: I feel like what differentiates us from that is that we don't just try to subscribe to one genre or anything like that. Because like we said, we all came from different backgrounds.
Nelson: We're all open-minded to whatever.
Darwin: The best way to describe it is me and Nelson build a hate hut inside (Ryan) Brewer and Ted's zen den.
Nelson: There's a yin and yang to our band. Bud Ice and green tea.
Darwin: And kombucha.
Teddy: Bud Ice and kombucha.
Darwin: That's really the Hank. motto.

MRR: You do come from a bit of a math rock area though, AMERICAN FOOTBALL being from here and stuff.
Darwin: I mean yeah, I think it definitely helped 'cause that's in our backyard. I don't know. It just kind of happened like that 'cause I listen to a shit ton of BRAID, because I like BRAID, and it just happened. And I listen to AMERICAN FOOTBALL because like, you have to. And OWLS. Mostly CAP'N JAZZ 'cause CAP'N JAZZ fucking rules. It just kind of happened that way. All three of us are pretty proficient at our instruments so we just kept pushing ourselves. We weren't trying to make it over-complicated; we were just trying to the best of our abilities. And our best abilities were just a little mathy, I guess.

MRR: When you first picked up an instrument, did you first think to tap on it?
Darwin: I did.
Teddy: I started off learning a lot of tabs, learning whole albums, and I got a METALLICA tab book and some of the solos had tapping in it. That's where I started to learn tapping. That's just sort of tapping in thirds, really simple comparatively, but I started to listen to a lot of acoustic guitar tapping, like solo acts like ANDY MCKEE, his "Drifting" song and ERIC MONGRAIN, things similar to AUGUST RUSH. Acoustic things like that is what got me sort of into tapping.

MRR: You talked a bit about wanting to get your sound cleaner and more straightforward, and I think you've achieved that live as well as on the record. How have fans been reacting to that?
Darwin: Mostly our live shows, it's been cool, every show we've been playing we've been progressively getting tighter and better.
Teddy: Without exaggeration, every show that we've played in the last few months someone has come up and said it's the best show that they've seen us play.
Darwin: I think we're just finally becoming a band.
Teddy: Getting used to how we each play so we can respond to each other.
Darwin: This April, Brewer's been in the band for a year, so once you get a new member, it takes a while to get everything set and we're just finally getting into that comfortable cradle, 'cause we were a three-piece for about a year.
Teddy: And then he joined and he had to re-learn all the old songs, and now we're at the point where we're writing new songs with him. And since he comes from a really different background with GOODNIGHT AND GOOD MORNING, it is changing our songs but in a subtle way.
Darwin: It's adding texture. He's adding the shingles to the roof.

MRR: So you're writing new songs?
Darwin: We're playing a few of them tonight.
Teddy: We had a few old songs that we wrote and actually started to record for the old record but never finalized them enough to put on the record, and we were playing around with a few of those and then ended up, last night, writing a new song just out of left field.

MRR: Can you explain the Great Cover-Up and why you chose to cover KORN?
Darwin: The great cover up is a charity thing that happens every year.
Teddy: It's a charity organization where bands cover other bands, and it's a big party.
Darwin: We chose to do KORN because we got asked to do it.
Teddy: KORN was actually our fourth choice. Our first choice was TEARS FOR FEARS 'cause we love TEARS FOR FEARS, but turns out Mike Ingram covered that last year, and there's a time delay so we couldn't do that, and then we were gonna do COHEED AND CAMBRIA but THAT'S NO MOON covered COHEED AND CAMBRIA this year.
Darwin: Then we were gonna do JIMMY EAT WORLD, then we realized JIMMY EAT WORLD kinda sucks to do.
Teddy: I said the only way that I'll do it is if we do KORN because we were just gonna not do it at all, but Darwin really didn't want to confirm that we were gonna do it and then cancel.
Darwin: I don't cancel shows, ever.
Teddy: I said that the only way we do it is if we do KORN.
Darwin: And then it happened. Nelson was living down south and Brewer's too artistic so he didn't wanna do it.
Teddy: So we got our old friends from STREET JUSTICE, the guitar player Matt and drummer Curtis.
Darwin: Matt's also the bass player for GAS UP YR HEARSE.
Teddy: Nelson's band.
Darwin: And Jake Lee who's in DOOMSAYER, and yeah, they knew most of the fuckin' riffs already.
Teddy: Yeah apparently Jake Lee already knew how to play most of the KORN songs before we started practicing them.
Darwin: We just did it, and it was fun. It was for charity.
Teddy: It was very nostalgic and I think that's what won the crowds, because I watched the video and it definitely wasn't the music that won them over.

MRR: Who are some of your favorite local bands to play with or watch or listen to?
Teddy: CAPYS are technically local.
Darwin: Yeah CAPYS. I love COMFORT FOOD, they never play anymore but I still love those guys.
Nelson: SMOKE COKE.
Teddy: I really like HORRIBLE THINGS.
Darwin: HORRIBLE THINGS, solid. I always liked OUR LADY, OUR LADY's not local but…

MRR: From Springfield.
Darwin: Yeah Springfield, but I've always liked that band, but now I'm in it so I like it even more.
Teddy: ENTA, too, 'cause there was a time when we were sort of like brother bands. We played a lot of the same shows and stuff. Right now we're sort of like that with WOODIE.
Darwin: Oh, the DIRTY FEATHERS! Love watching those guys.

MRR: So you've played Pygmalion Music Festival a couple times. How's that been?
Darwin: The first time it was kinda weird. We were the second band of the festival to play. We were the drunkest too.
Teddy: Back then we were a very different band. We would sort of try to see how drunk we could get, then play.
Darwin: We had like a five beer minimum each before we could play.
Teddy: And there's 312 on that, and they'd put Southern Comfort in it without even asking.
Darwin: They would pour you a full beer, take a sip and then top it off, and then hand it to you, then call you a pussy if you don't drink it. And they cut the sleeves off my shirt!
Teddy: Mine too, while we were wearing our shirts they literally cut the sleeves right off our shirts. So that was the first year. The second year we lived and learned.
Darwin: Then we played with METZ, and METZ destroyed.
Teddy: SO MANY DYNAMOS was a really good show. They're a really good band, but there's nothing like playing with a band that, like, I felt like the show was a much better fit, like, us, METZ and the STARS, THEY BECKON. It was the punk show of Pygmalion.

MRR: When it comes down to it, you're pretty much a punk band.
Teddy: It started off as just drunk kids making the music that we wanted to play, which I think is punk.
Darwn: We still love doing DIY shows and love playing basements, so I guess we're still a punk band, even though our music isn't so much punk. We still have riffs and we still have punk parts. We still are a punk band, just art punk.
Teddy: What I'd say is psychedelic math punk is where it is now.
Darwin: It was emo (when we first started), then it went to math punk, and then it just became math rock, and now it's back to psychedelic math punk.
Teddy: Psychedelic math-y punk. I like saying math-y because we just sort of have a tinge of the complicated—not full-blown. Playing with other actual math bands on tour, who are actually math-y, we're just like, they're calculus and we're summer school algebra.
Darwin: I think the only band we sound like that we've ever played with is…
Teddy: CAPYS.
Darwin: Either CAPYS or PISCES AT THE ANIMAL FAIR, 'cause they have some grooves too. We finally played with this band called the PARA-MEDICS. I've been worshipping those guys forever. They rule so hard and it was just like, yeah we're definitely not math rock.
Teddy: They're all music majors and just phenomenal at their instruments.
Darwin: We're just boys who taught ourselves how to play.
Teddy: I'm a classically trained upright bass player but I don't know if that counts.
Darwin: It doesn't.

MRR: But really! When you started out, it was drinking and playing around, but now it's something more than that.
Darwin: When we started out we were trying to just sass it up and just party. The best way to put it is we all have a bad case of "get huge-itis."
Teddy: We've figured out our limitations.

MRR: Is playing in this band the most important thing right now?
Darwin: Playing music is definitely the most important thing in my life
Nelson: We all live together. It's the easiest thing we can do together.
Darwin: We're all best friends, we argue, but we figure it out.

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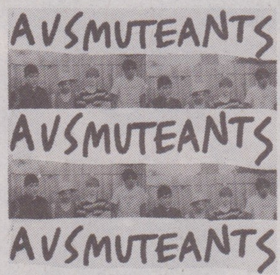

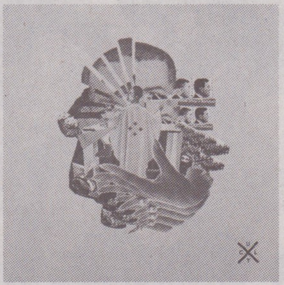

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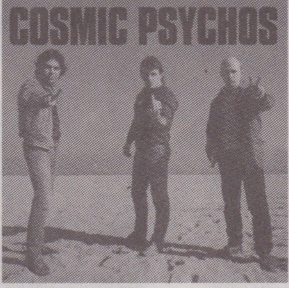

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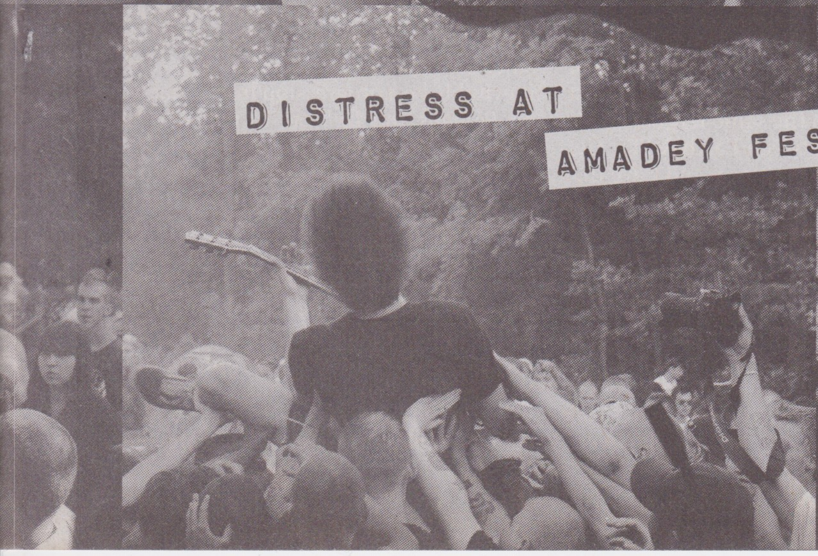

DISTRESS AT AMADEY FEST

Crusades

Crusades is a four-headed monster for punk rock band. This Canadian band has based their sound on the more catchy side of punk, but they tend to make it differently by making it dark, threatening and desperate. Their lyrical topics are mainly focused on many anti-Christian issues, such as the shadows of Christianity, atheism, astronomy and executed iconoclasts. When their bleak imagery and visual feel overall is incorporated into all of this, we have something truly unique in our hands. This is the interview made with their guitarist and founding member Dave Williams. The interview was made for the issue 9.5 of the Finnish Ajatuksen Valo zine. Ilkka Tuominen of Cigarette Crossfire assisted on some of the questions. That interview was translated into Finnish, but here s the original English-written version for you to read. Enjoy and become enlightened! By Jouni Parkku. Photos by Martin Blondeau and Marc Gärtner.

MRR: Hey there! How's it going?
Dave: It's going pretty well, thanks. Impatiently waiting for this goddamned Canadian winter to end.

MRR: Could you first tell us the brief history of your band?
Dave: Alright. Well, Crusades started in late 2010, shortly after Emmanuel and I returned from Sedatives' European tour. We'd known Skottie and Jordy for some time, having played with the Creeps and simply because the Ottawa music scene is quite small and close-knit. Emmanuel and I had discussed wanting to start something more topically serious, musically dark, but still accessible, and we knew Skottie and Jordy would be a great fit.

MRR: Your music is an interesting combination of melodic punk, hardcore and even crust to some extent (Portland region bands have similar traits to yours). I could say that you have achieved a sound of your own. Was this sound *the* sound you tried to achieve in the first place? What could be described as your musical influences?
Dave: When Crusades started, our songwriting was definitely a bit more straightforward, but I'd say it's closer now to what I'd always hoped it would be, which is a perfect balance of our collective influences. Skottie and Jordy come from a more pop-based background, growing up on gloomy, art '80s stuff like the Smiths, the Cure, Talking Heads, etc. But they also came of age in kinda the "post-Lookout" pop punk era, listening to a lot of American Steel, Alkaline Trio, Lillingtons, Methadones, and the like, and that combination certainly shines through in Crusades. Emmanuel and I, on the other hand, were pretty deeply entrenched in the GASR/Ebullition/CrimethInc./No Idea, DIY, PC hardcore community—cutting our teeth on octave chords, AK Press catalogs, and rolling around on the floor while screaming into the mic. That said, we also share a soft spot for the breakdown-laden moshcore of the same era—Integrity, Ringworm, Disembodied, Harvest, etc. And those influences, while musically less apparent in Crusades' work, make up the bulk of my lyrical and aesthetic influence. In terms of specific influences when I'm writing, I almost always come back to the same few bands for inspiration: Trial, Between Earth & Sky, Get High, the Spectacle, Krakatoa, and Cave In.

MRR: The songs are quite diverse, but they are not obscure in any way. In fact they are quite catchy. How important it is for you to be catchy... yet dark?
Dave: Being a musically accessible vehicle for dark, serious topics was absolutely a main priority when starting Crusades. We collectively acknowledged that there was a sizeable gap between bands who were writing memorable songs and those who were saying something important. That's not to say that there were none, but that the numbers were sorely lacking. A lot of the bands that initially drew us to punk—the Clash, Dead Kennedys, early Crass, etc.—combined desperate, thought-provoking lyrics with what were essentially pop song structures—and it's no coincidence that it's the work of these bands that endures year after year.

MRR: You have evolved between your records. *Perhaps...* was slower, more thoughtful, and musically more diverse than its predecessor. Do you think that you have evolved through your career? How important is evolution for you?
Dave: We've definitely evolved significantly since our first songs, and our next record will inevitably be a progression from what we did on *Perhaps You Deliver*. To me, *The Sun is Down* sounds like a band that's still finding their footing, not quite brave enough to bring their more obscure influences to the table, simply working within safer boundaries. And while *Perhaps You Deliver* incorporated a wider array of influences, tempos and textures, and was conceptually and lyrically more obscure—it's still important for us that we write *songs*. We want to be sure that people listening, and even *we*, have something to grab on to, to sing loudly and get excited about. But yeah, musical evolution

is incredibly important, particularly in that our own tastes evolve constantly and, in the end, we're really writing the songs *we* want to play and hear, songs that showcase both our abilities and our passions, and it's only natural that these things grow and change.

MRR: Could you tell us something about your song-writing process? Has it evolved through the years?
Dave: Our songwriting process hasn't changed too much since we started out. I tend to write complete or at least near-complete songs as opposed to separate parts, so I'll often bring the skeleton of a full song to practice, and each member will write their corresponding part, and we'll discuss arrangement, dropping certain parts, etc. Emmanuel has an incredible ear for what a song might be lacking—that certain "punch"—and comes up with a lot of great additions and arrangements right on the spot. And Skottie is unofficially in charge of nearly all of the vocal melodies. Even those he doesn't write—which are few—almost always benefit from his advice.

MRR: You have always endorsed lyrical depth. I could say that it's one of the most appealing sides of the band. One could even say that you prove that a melodic punk rock band could sing about other topics than skating and cheeseburgers. You seem to avoid the most blatant and dull lyrical themes and instead seem to focus on more intelligent and profound topics with a great devotion. What do you think?
Dave: I've never had too much interest in writing about lighthearted topics. Without sounding like a bummer, I guess punk's never really been that "funny" to me. It's definitely fun and wonderful and makes me very happy, but my idea of punk has always been about catharsis and change. Those chills you get when a band connects with you so perfectly on that human level, with anger and vulnerability and intellect and empathy... when you can hear these things in someone's voice, when their words hit you right in your gut—like the first time you identified with an Avail song... or felt the longing in At The Drive-In's "Napoleon Solo"... or the paranoia throughout all of *Plastic Surgery Disasters*... —that's what I want to write. That's how I always want punk to feel, y' know?

MRR: How often do people contact you about your lyrics or come to you talking about them? Do you think people have become interested in your band because of them, or perhaps turned it down for the same reason? Having this kind of lyrical context is not common within the punk scene, especially the more melodic vein of it. Have you ever thought about this?
Dave: We've had quite a bit of interest in the specifics of our lyrics, and I'm always more than happy to talk about it. And I honestly hope it's either the main reason people get into our band or stay away from it. If you're not interested in music with thought-provoking content, then I'm not particularly interested in your interest. We're not trying to write a mindless soundtrack to your moshpit recital or house party or skate video. I love a gang sing-a-long as much as anyone else, but it's gotta have substance.

MRR: Your first album *The Sun is Down and The Night is Riding In* focuses largely on anti-religious topics. Did that album contain a more specific concept other than commenting on those issues in general?
Dave: That record is actually about my own childhood and growing up in a religious community. It's a chronicling of my own faith-based fears, of the impact that Christianity had on those close to me, on the lives of my loved ones that it destroyed, and of casting off those disgusting shackles at a young age and never looking back.

MRR: *Parables* featured on the lyrical side a man with a lantern. You could say that it's a "concept album" (it's a two-song EP) with a certain story, with both of the tracks covering the same topic and having also similar song titles. Could you describe the concept of *Parables*?
Dave: The lyrics on both sides of *Parables* are actually an adaptation of one of Nietzsche's poetic pieces, and one of my favourites of all his written work. It is the story of an enlightened "madman" who happens upon a crowd of people and shares with them the news of God's death. The crowd merely stares in silence and disbelief at the "insane" man, who, in frustration at his futility, smashes his light to the ground.

MRR: The *Perhaps...* album is a concept album about Giordano Bruno, a martyr who lived in the 15th century. He was persecuted by the Catholic Church because of his beliefs (he wasn't a big fan of Moses or Jesus, and he coined some theories about the functionality of our solar system) and finally executed. An iconoclast, he's—if not forgotten—a lesser-known figure in the history books. How did you decide to make an album about him?
Dave: Bruno's story actually came to me through Roman Polanski's film *The Ninth Gate*. The film centers around a fictional book, Aristide Torchia's *De Umbrarum Regni Novem Portis* (*The Nine Doors to the Kingdom of Shadows*), and Torchia's character, an Italian mystic and philosopher, is supposedly based upon Giordano Bruno. Bruno was charged with "holding beliefs contrary to those of the Catholic faith," by the Roman Inquisition and spent eight years in a lightless dungeon before being publicly burned to death. Bruno's "contrarian" beliefs were his findings on the infinity of the cosmos. These early astronomical studies were groundbreaking, and coupled with Bruno's astrological leanings, amounted to unforgivable heresy. The story of his life and martyrdom complimented our chosen stance very well, and it went from there.

MRR: How did you write the lyrics for the album? I can see that the first perspective is used, but one can't really tell if they are "written" by Bruno himself or is it someone else's perspective?
Dave: I intentionally wrote from multiple perspectives on this record, as well as incorporating lines culled directly from Bruno's own writings, to emphasize Bruno's universality, to highlight the fact that he was merely a man whose beliefs fell outside of an imposed norm. He studied science, he spoke of the future, he wrote of love, and he cut his own path into the Earth at the cost of his life. I wanted to look at this from within and without. From a modern perspective as well as an idea of Bruno's own.

MRR: About the concepts within your lyrics in general... do they give you some guidelines or could they restrict you?
Dave: This is actually a common question. I've yet to come up against any restrictions, and certainly our chosen stance offers a wide array of topics within familiar guidelines.

MRR: Are there any other topics you'd like to cover? Although one can say that you restrict yourselves to anti-religious themes, those themes are, after all, quite broad. You can have atheist themes, astronomy, occult, wacky suicide cults and other things. You could do concept albums with just about everything. What themes would you cover in the future? What have you planned?
Dave: There are plenty of topics available beneath our "antichristian umbrella" that I'd love to touch on at some point. We could write another five LPs about rapist priests and Vatican cover-ups, but those are well-worn roads at this point. Without getting into too much detail about the next record, which is already underway, the theme will be one of mourning and yet of celebration.

MRR: No one has been credited for the lyrics. Do you want to have them uncredited or does a single person within the band write them?
Dave: I write all of the lyrics, and the others help edit my often wordy, long-winded, abstract, pseudo-poetry into something that we can actually sing.

MRR: When it comes to the visual appearance of the band, you have all these darker elements in your album art as well. You also have a recognizable logo of people in a circle. What meanings are behind this logo and the visual context in general? If you look at your album covers you can mistake Crusades for a crust or black metal band.
Dave: It's important to us that the band's visual aesthetic is representative of our content, and thus it is dark, somewhat bleak,

The Sun is Down and The Night is Riding a chronicling of my own faith-based fears, of the impact that Christianity had on those close to me, on the lives of my loved ones that it destroyed, and of casting off those disgusting shackles at a young age and never looking back.

but not lifeless. The circle to me represents the duality of Crusades' ideas: it can be seen as both a prayer circle of children, minds warped and controlled by fear and manipulation, or it can represent the hope and innocence of youth, and of what we can achieve working for and against things together.

MRR: Your releases have been published by various labels. *The Sun is Down And The Night is Riding In* was published by various labels including Sabotage, Hardware Records, Razorcake Records and It's Alive Records. Also, the tape version was published by Dirt Cult Records. Then again, *Parables* was published by It's Alive Records and Destructure Records, and *Perhaps...* was released by No Idea. So that's a variety of labels from both sides of the pond. How come? What advantages and disadvantages are there to having your records published by many labels?

Dave: Quite simply, we've just chosen to work with a lot of our friends. We'd had prior relationships with nearly all of the labels we've worked with, either from releasing records or touring with our other bands, through my mastering company, or other endeavors. The advantage to releasing records on both sides of the ocean is the promotion and availability of your records on a greater scale, which certainly makes touring abroad easier and potentially more successful. It simply creates opportunities that might not be there otherwise, specifically when working with smaller or mid-size independent labels. It saves the labels money, fosters working relationships, and expands everyone's reach. The only disadvantage is that it can occasionally be tricky to coordinate timelines and such, but overall it's still a great way to go.

MRR: Your first self-titled EP is now sold-out and seems to be sought after. Sometimes it has quite a high price tag. How do you feel about this?

Dave: Ha ha, I think we all feel that first EP isn't particularly good or representative of our sound and therefore will *probably* remain out of print. I recommend that people save their money and download the songs if they're curious.

MRR: Your visual look and feel has kept melodic punk rock people sort of distant from the band, not being quite sure what to expect, but now being on No Idea, it all makes sense, you guys fit their varied roster spot on. Even though they are known to have put out shoegaze, powerviolence, pop punk, indie rock, the style you guys have taken over is the kinda stuff No Idea is best known for. Do you feel this restricts you from doing stuff or enables you to pursue even weirder shores?

Dave: I think being part of the widely varied No Idea roster absolutely allows for huge creative freedom, particularly within the current crop of bands. Between us, Creepoid, Ampere, Good Luck, Black God, Shores, etc. and a back catalog that runs the gamut from Assholeparade to Ghost Mice, it doesn't feel like there's anything we shouldn't do based on our label's "sound."

MRR: How did you guys end up on No Idea? Did Var come to one of your shows or did you have to beg him to come over?

Dave: Ha ha! We begged and pleaded! I'm kidding. We started talking to Var after Tony at No Idea/The Fest said that our first LP was one of his favourites of the year and invited us to play at The Fest 11 in 2012. At some point I mentioned that No Idea had been my favorite label for quite some time and that many of the No Idea bands had been a huge influence on Crusades. Shortly thereafter, Tony played our record for Var and the rest of the No Idea gang, Var called me at work one day, and things got rolling.

MRR: Do you have any other bands or projects where you can channel your creativity and desire to play? At least you Dave are involved with the Steve Adamyk Band as a studio member?

Dave: Skottie and Jordy still play in the Creeps, who have a new LP coming out soon on It's Alive Records. Emmanuel plays in a great hardcore band on Deranged Records called Pregnancy Scares and also organizes the annual Ottawa Explosion Weekend festival. I haven't been doing stuff with Adamyk for a while now, but I'm playing drums in a rad punk/metal band called Black Tower, which is the brainchild of Skottie's awesome wife (and the band's guitarist/vocalist) Erin. Skottie also plays bass in Black Tower and our pal Blake plays guitar. We're currently writing our first LP.

MRR: You are certainly different to any other melodic hardcore punk bands. Have you ever felt being different to other bands or even outcasts within the punk rock scene, as a band?

Dave: I don't think we've ever felt like outcasts, and in fact it's been awesome to be able to play with a wide variety of bands, genre-wise. We've felt right at home on stage alongside Red Dons, Buried Inside, Obits, Alaskan, etc. All four of us enjoy listening to and playing so many types of music that it means a lot to be embraced by multiple subgenres.

MRR: So... what are you planning to do next?

Dave: Well, we'd started planning a US tour for this summer, but it had to be shelved for a few reasons: my wife Jessica and I are expecting our second kid, Skottie and Erin bought a new house, Emmanuel and his wife Ula just started a new business that's particularly busy in the summer, and Jordy's got a whole lot brewing too, so the timing wasn't ideal. The plan is to hunker down as much as possible and finish the next LP and likely head back to Europe in 2015.

MRR: This is the end of this interview... If you'd like to say something, you may speak now. Thanks for the interview!

Dave: Thanks a lot for thinking we were interesting enough to talk to, and if anyone's got anything they'd like to talk about, get in touch at thecircle@crusades.ca. Take care.

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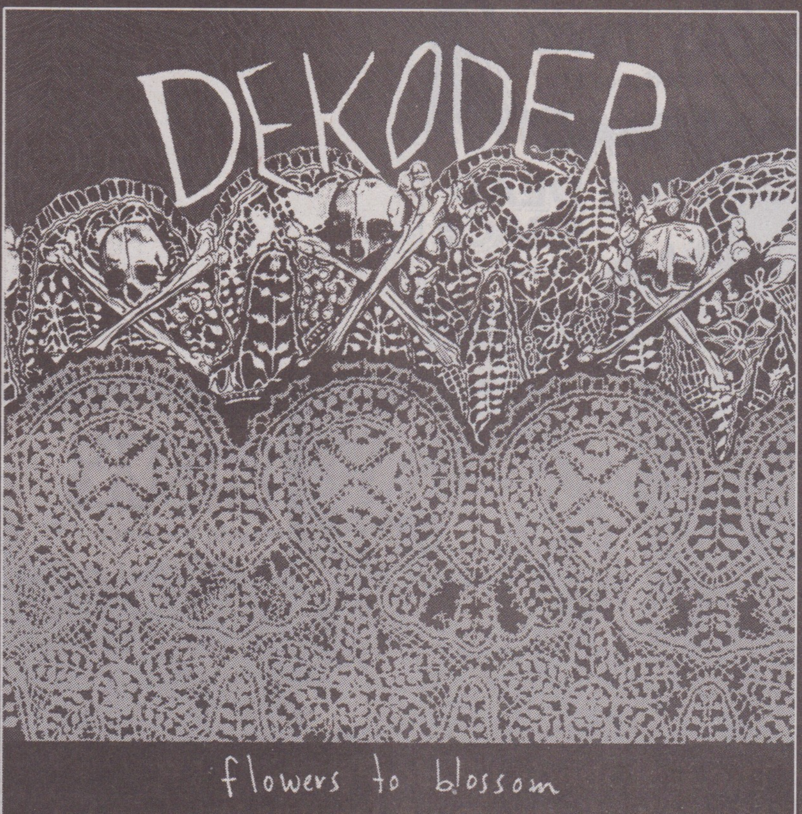

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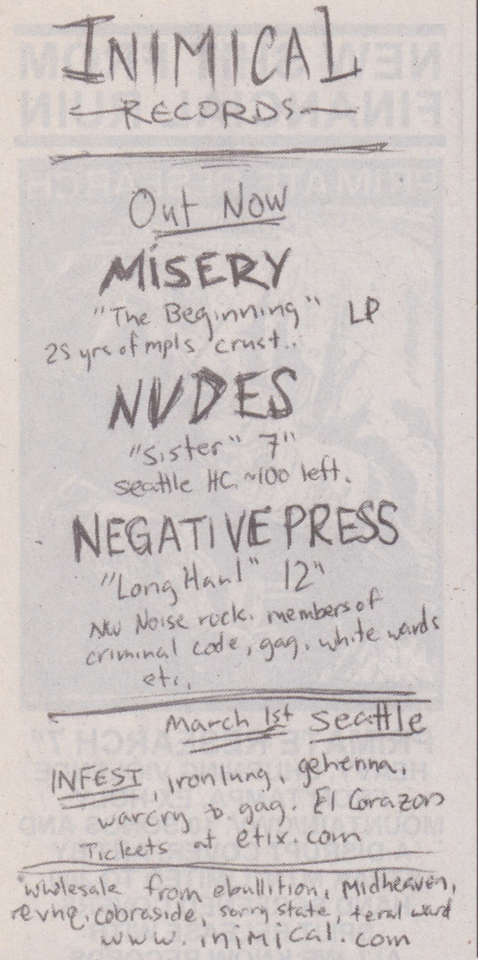

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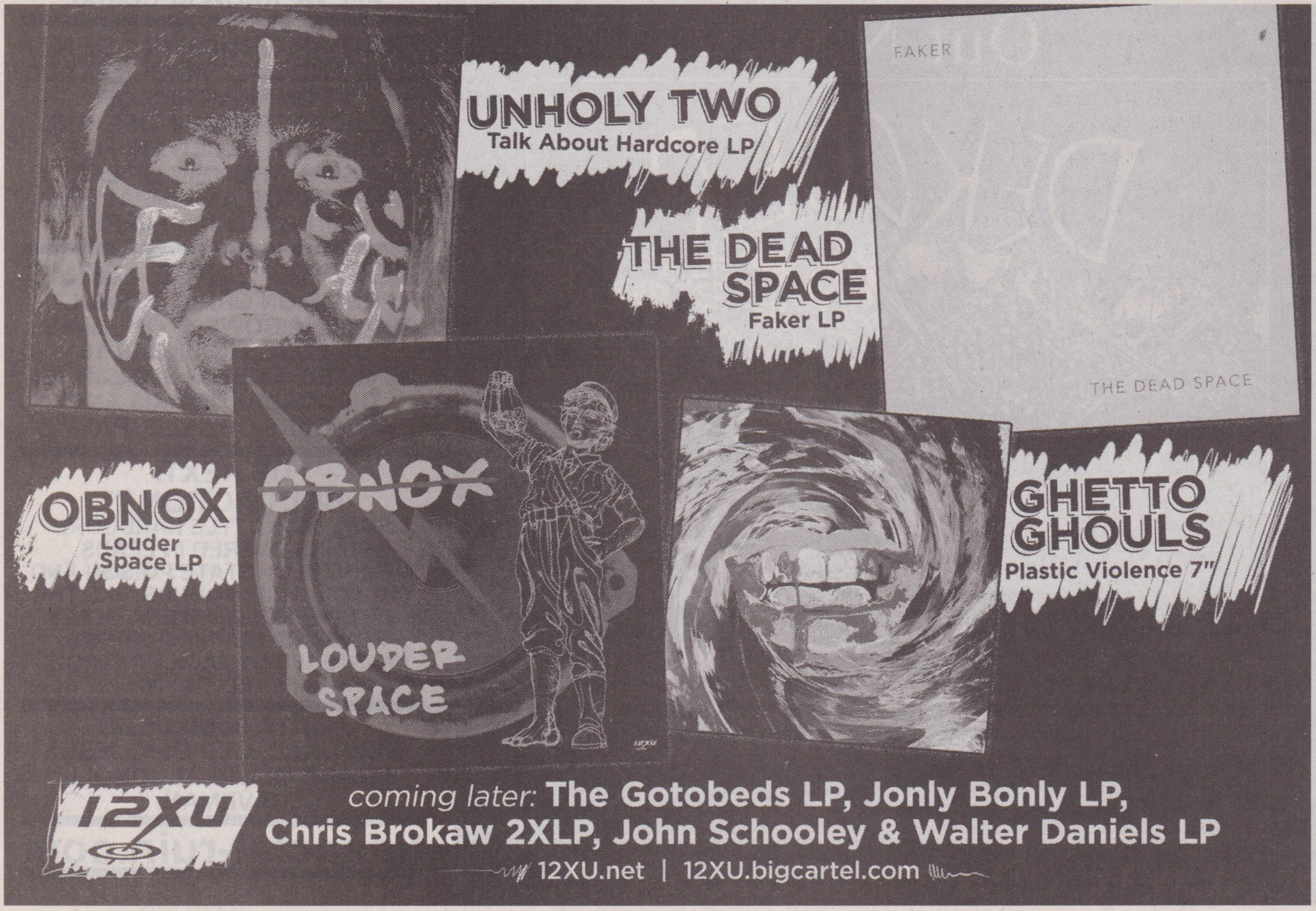

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There's a very good chance that if you've ever picked up an issue of Razorcake you've come across both Ben Snakepit's and Mitch Clem's work. Both artists are regular contributors and have run autobiographical comic strips in their pages. Mitch Clem recently ended his regular strip, My Stupid Life, in order to focus on other projects, such as editing the punk comic anthologies As You Were and Turnstile Comix, along with doing what seems to be an endless amount of record cover art. Ben Snakepit is still, even after fourteen years, going strong with his daily autobiographical comic, Snakepit—which has been compiled into six books—along with continuing his regular strip in Razorcake. Both guys have been very active in the DIY punk community for quite some time, not only offering up their art for countless bands' t-shirts, record covers, etc., but also playing in bands and helping put on shows. Being that both of these guys live somewhat near each other in Texas (and recently put out a split comic zine) it only made sense to try to get them to interview each other instead of trying to get two separate interviews. After all, what's the worst that could happen? The conversation was recorded in a van, on a hot Texas day, outside of a wedding reception that they both happened to be invited to—just the two of them talking about what they do best.

Questions supplied by Vadim Gurov and Maksim Dinkevich of the Russian punk blog sadwave.com. Intro by Ray Suburbia.

Ben, Mitch, Amanda, and a pineapple.

BEN SNAKEPIT & MITCH CLEM

Ben: How you doing Mitch?

Mitch: Hey buddy, I'm doing well. How about you?

Ben: I'm doing good. I'm gonna eat this cupcake with bacon on it. It's root beer flavored cupcake with bacon on it.

Mitch: We should specify that we are in a van outside of a show in San Antonio right now…

Ben: That is actually a wedding reception…

Mitch: A wedding reception slash punk rock show because that's what people who like punk rock who are over 30 do, so readers of *Maximum Rocknroll* you have something to look forward to in seventeen years.

Ben: Mitch, how did you create/develop your *Nothing Nice to Say* characters? Is there any specific reason behind it? Are there people associate with the characters?

Mitch: Wonderful question, thank you. The initial characters that were created were Blake and Fletcher, the two stars of the strip, and I think that they were created via a wholly predictable and omnipresent comedy structure of a crazy person and a straight man, as it were. Most of the other characters are just sort of supposed to parody archetypes of, you know, punk rock standards…or something. I dunno! I'm already bad at this. I don't do a lot of interviews…

Ben: A punk rock *Seinfeld*, if you will…

Mitch: [laughter] Absolutely. Elaine's the Riot Grrrl, George is the…

Ben: George is the gutter punk, getting stuff from the trash.

Mitch: The only character that is based on an actual person is Phillip, the emo kid, who is based on—I don't know how short I can make this story—but basically a girl I went out with in high school, we broke up and she started going out with this horrifically ugly man who fronted a terrible screamo band. Now, I'm not still harboring any animosity towards this failed high school romance… but when I started the comic I was nineteen years old, so maybe there was still a little bit of "yeah, fuck you dude…" when I was creating the character. That's the only one based on anyone, the rest are pretty standard comedy archetypes.

Mitch: Did you solve the alter ego conflict between Ben Snakepit and Ben White? Would you say that Ben Snakepit is closer to the real you now?

Ben: Wow. That's a good question. I think that I've been able to take the two separate parts of my life, that being my comic identity or my "punk self," Ben Snakepit—you know that's my punk name—and Ben White, that's my real name, and that's the guy who goes to work and punches a time clock and hangs out with fucking Baloney Lady every day… Ben Snakepit is the one who goes and eats bacon cupcakes in

Ben Snakepit

That's it.
Mitch: One of the funniest things that's ever happened when you and I were both in the same room was—and now I'm saying this to the microphone—Ben put out... you basically had a book release party for your second book I think, and you had the Arrivals come play at Monkey Wrench.
Ben: Yes.
Mitch: Monkey Wrench, the anarchist book collective in Austin, Texas—look 'em up on the internet, google.com. And fucking Paddy from the Arrivals kept picking up your book and introducing himself as Ben Snakepit and saying, "Hey, uh, my name's Ben Snakepit and I'd like..."—just in this *super* quiet voice, as if though he was reading poetry at a coffee shop. [laughter] "Uh, my name is, uh, Ben Snakepit and I wrote this book, and uh, I'd like to read to read you a selection." [laughter] And he clears his throat and flips to a page and he's like, "Today I went to work..."—and there's a long pause—"...it sucked." Another long pause—and Paddy surveys the crowd very slowly and then he licks his thumb to turn the page and goes, "...and then I got stoned." [laughter]
Ben: [laughing] That was good, wasn't it?
Mitch: So fucking funny! But that's the beauty of your comic—it isn't that any individual strip is necessarily noteworthy on its own—it's about the whole final fucking thing as a whole. "The whole thing as a whole," see how good I am at... words.
Ben: I think you got the point across quite well.
Mitch: One of us had more to drink...

a van in San Antonio on the weekends...
Mitch: And does interviews for *Maximum Rocknroll*...
Ben: Interviewing for *Maximum Rocknroll*—that's a magazine you've never heard of 'cause it's extra fucking punk [laughter]. But I dunno, it's a pretty... In the early days it was more of a "who am I? Am I really this guy? Am I this cartoon man who is shitting his pants and getting drunk all the time? Or am I this guy who owes all this money for his student loan?" You know what I mean? I think now at this point the two entities are very defined and separate from one another and I can very easily slip in and out of the two different ideas.
Mitch: I'm improvising a follow up, but do you think now that you're doing autobiographical, daily diary comics you're covering maybe an aspect of yourself more than your whole self?
Ben: I guess... That's a good question. Yeah, I guess so. I mean there are certain things, of course, that I choose to leave out of the comics. The comic is all true but it's not everything that happens. And I pick and choose—people are always like "I know you so well"—well, you only know the things that *I let you know* about me.
Mitch: You're so deceptive. Some day you're gonna have to do *The Untold Tales of Snakepit* and cover all that extra shit.
Ben: To be published upon my death, after I'm no longer alive.

Ben: Why did you stop drawing *Nothing Nice to Say* and focus on other projects? Which of your art pieces were most successful from your point of view?

Mitch: I stopped doing *Nothing Nice to Say* because I stopped coming up with ideas for comics. At some point... It's a double-edged sword doing a three times weekly comic—and I'm saying this to someone who does a seven times weekly comic, so maybe I'm full of shit—but it's this struggle to come up with material. At some point—and you can tell if you go back and re-read the archives of *Nothing Nice*—there are little stretches, before every hiatus, where it just... it sucks. The jokes are terrible. It's super uninspired. At some point it's just like, "why should I force this thing that isn't naturally inspired and isn't speaking to me and isn't coming out of me naturally?" You know at some point you gotta do you, maan! [laughter]
Ben: That's right... I fully understand what you're saying about having to come up with something every day, because most of my comics are nothing—nothing happened that day. I went to work. I came home. I fell asleep.

Ben: You're an artist and a writer. What's harder: develop the plot or draw it out?

Mitch: Draw it out. Drawing sucks.
Ben: And which one is more important to you...
Mitch: [grumble]
Ben: I'm sorry... what's more important for you, a nice picture or a cool story?
Mitch: That is such a good question that I could write an entire fucking thousand-page book about it, because I have a huge pet peeve when people put absolutely zero effort into the art whatsoever. There's a web comic called XKCD and it is beloved and it is *hugely* popular—more popular than me and Ben combined—like, it's the biggest goddamn thing on the internet...
Ben: I've never heard of it... except from you. But I don't read comics. I don't like comics. [laughter] I hate them.
Mitch: Anyway, it's fucking stick figures! The writing's good but it's literally stick figures, and at some point it's kinda like, you couldn't find... you couldn't find a *single* friend who likes to draw? Like, you've never seen Craigslist before? I dunno how you find an artist if you can't draw yourself, but I feel there's like

minimum possible amount of effort that needs to be put into something. Art and story both, I guess. So which is more important? Who knows? We're sitting in a van and it's super fucking warm in here. I might pass out.
Ben: I mean, we can open the windows.
Mitch: Yeah, but then people are gonna hear us talking... I don't want people to hear us.
[Ben rolls down the windows]
Mitch: Well, now people are definitely going to hear us.
Ben: Well too fucking bad. They get the sneak preview.

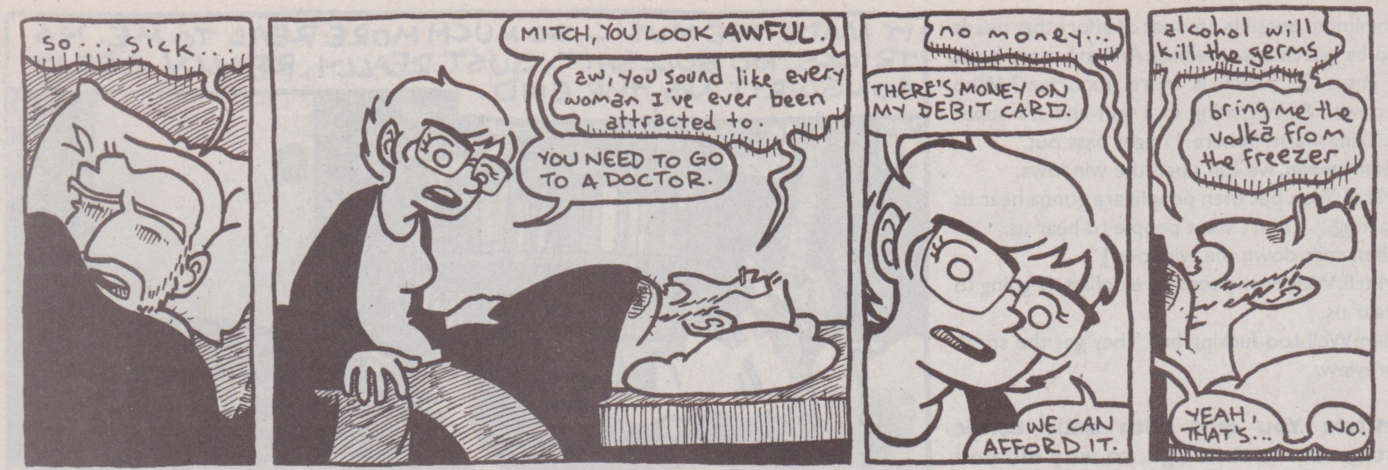
Mitch: You quit with daily comic strips some time ago, so why did you start it once again? Would you consider Snakepit reunion as a success?
Ben: Ah. Okay. I never actually quit—I only threatened to quit. I told everyone I was gonna quit because I went through some stupid mental breakdown, or some bullshit, where I thought I didn't want to do it anymore and told everyone. I had a press release—the whole deal—that I was gonna quit.
Mitch: You had a press release?!
Ben: Yeah! I had a press release, it was in the paper. *The fucking newspaper.*
Mitch: Which newspaper?
Ben: *The Austin American-Statesman*!
Mitch: [laughing] Wow! Jesus.
Ben: The real newspaper. Not the *Chronicle*, not some hippie paper, the fucking paper that President Bush reads and shit. [laughter]
Mitch: See... the understated comedy of Ben Snakepit. "President Bush reads..." Good one!
Ben: I told everyone I was gonna quit and then I just didn't quit—I just kept going. So I wouldn't really say that it was a reunion, I would say that I'm the boy who cried wolf, in a way.

Ben: Let me ask you another question here, Mitch. Your strips are really well known within punk audiences...
Mitch. In your face. In your face, Ben. That was to Ben. In your face.
Ben: Do you have any feedback from the bands that you're writing about? Would it be possible to name an example of an extreme positive or negative feedback?
Mitch: I've got fucking extreme negative feedback for you! I have a *very, very* good friend of mine—his name is Max, he lives in Austin, you know Max. Max Gregor.
Ben: Max from Lemuria.
Mitch: He now plays bass in Lemuria, sure. So hey, guess what? That technically counts as a name drop.
Ben: Boo ya!
Mitch: I win! I win punk rock! But anyway, we've been friends for a long time and he, you know, he is really good with sound. He does sound at a lot of clubs around Austin. And he went on tour with Anti-Flag when they were on tour at the Warped Tour tour. Tour, Tour, Tour. I'm just going to say "tour" as much as possible. So when they passed through San Antonio, Max invited me to come hang out. So my girlfriend, and artistic collaborator, Amanda and I went to go hang out with him. But we weren't watching the bands or anything, so he was hanging out on the Anti-Flag bus... so we were on the Anti-Flag bus. [laughter] And I had made a comic about Anti-Flag, once upon a time, and I didn't think that it was that mean, but basically... It was something about how it's kinda funny that they have so many songs about how much they hate fashion punks with giant mohawks and they themselves have giant mohawks. It's the most obvious goddamn joke that anyone could ever imagine, right? But all the guys in the band were very nice. I mean, they were all just hanging out, watching TV. And then their tour manager came on the bus and Max introduced me and the tour manager was like, "Oh. So you're that fucking asshole that's talking shit about Anti-Flag all the time, huh?"
Ben: Ooooohhhh...
Mitch: And maybe I'm not great with emotional stability, so I kind of went from zero to suicidal in like no time flat and I just, I just had to leave. I'm like, "I'm not even gonna watch Bad Religion... I'm outta here." [laughter] That was a fucking bummer. That was a real downer, man.
Ben: Yeah. "Welcome to our tour bus... asshole."
Mitch: I didn't even think that I said anything particularly mean. No one in the band was mad at me. They're sitting on a fucking tour bus—my car almost broke down on the way five miles down the highway to their show. So clearly one of us won, and it wasn't the asshole writing the comics.

Mitch Clem

Ben: Dark Horse published some of your books... Can you talk about this experience? Was it successful or not?
Mitch: Dark Horse published one of my books. It was very, very unsuccessful. I think I lost them a lot of money and I apologize, formally, to all the people at Dark Horse. In fact, the editor of the *Nothing Nice to Say* book was fired between that book coming out and now.
Ben: No shit?! Really?!
Mitch: Oh, yeah. There were other issues...
Ben: They're not that kind of publisher, right? They don't do that kinda stuff. They put out superhero comics...
Mitch: Right. They put out *Hellboy*, they put out *300*, they put out... well, you know. They put out stuff for comic book people. *Nothing Nice to Say* is not for comic book people.
Ben: Absolutely.
Mitch: It's for punk music fans. And I told them that before the book came out. I was really working hard to get them to distro through Mordam—you know, when that still existed. Lumberjack... trying to get them... [burp] Excuse me. We're both burping a lot.
Ben: It's these bacon cupcakes, and the beer, and whatever this is from Taco Palenque.
Mitch: Anyway, I was trying to get them to distribute into record stores and maybe more infoshops and more indie friendly comic book stores and they just fought me tooth and nail at every attempt to do that, and so I guess joke's on them. [laughter] I didn't pay for the fucking book, so... [laughter]

Ben: I'm gonna ask you one more here. It seems that you're really productive. You're publishing art pieces



every day and receiving tons of positive feedback on Facebook, etc. And on the other hand you seem to be rather a sad person [laughter] and you might not be satisfied with life. Why? [laughter]

Mitch: You guys have to understand, my friend Ben is reading me these questions, and there're just some stuff that we're not gonna get into, that we're not gonna talk about.

Ben: I don't think you're a sad person, Mitch.

Mitch: Ugh, you guys… I'm still working… I'm still here. I'm still alive, so there's that. I'm working on it. I'm working on it.

Ben: Hey, that's a good enough answer.

Mitch: That's… that's awkward…

Ben: Why don't we move on?

Mitch: As I see it, daily art might become a routine. Would you consider a constant music activity (shows, band practice) as routine that might become boring, especially in one genre?

Ben: Absolutely. Yes. That's why I quit most of the bands I was in. I hate it. It's all work. It's all work, it's no fun anymore… I'm turning 40 in two months. I'm an old man. And when you're 40 years old playing in an empty room to like five people, you know, at four in the morning, on a Tuesday night… it's sad, and it's depressing, and it's not fun, and there's no point to it. There's no point. I've gotten it out of my system, all the music that I need to do. I still like playing every once in a while, I like playing with Ghost Knife, and doing little projects here and there, but I made the realization that I'm not going to be a "rockstar." Ever. It's not happening. So music has become purely a hobby for me—and a very, very seldom-visited hobby at this point.

Mitch: Wow. So you're saying that you don't want to start a band with me?

Ben: I'll start a band with you… as long as we only have to practice once a month.

Mitch: I mean, that's more frequently than I can get up to Austin, so…

Ben: Well, we'd have to practice down here. Practice spaces are too expensive up in Austin.

Mitch: Oh shit.

Mitch Clem

Ben: Well, let's keep going here, we've got a lot of questions to get through.

Mitch: Is this interview going to take up the entire issue of *Maximum Rocknroll*?

Ben: I dunno. I hope they're gonna have to edit it down quite a bit.

Mitch: Please leave all the funny stuff I said and take out all the stupid stuff.

Ben: Oh, here we go… Is there any point behind mid-life crisis? Does it make any sense for you to do whatever is interesting to a person for a long time? I don't understand that question.

Mitch: I am, as of the date of this recording, 31 years old so I would ask Ben Snakepit—the 39-year-old—the mid-life crisis question. So what do you think, Ben? Is there a point to a mid-life crisis?

Ben: Umm… it doesn't matter. Point, or no point, you either have one or you don't. I definitely had… you know, I'm 39 years old and I'm at this punk show with a bunch of 20-year-olds and I'm about to play and clearly this is my mid-life crisis. You know, I bought a bass last year, like "why?" I had a bass… I had a bass—it worked fine.

Mitch: This is what you've been doing. The mid-life crisis has to be a change, don't you think? Would a mid-life crisis for a punk be that you get a really good job?

Ben: You quit punk and get a job? If that's the case, I've been trying to have a mid-life crisis, but I can't get a good enough job. [laughter]

Mitch: Vadim, I recommend the film *American Beauty* if you would like to further explore the topic of mid-life crises.

Ben: There you go. That's a good one.

Ben: Why do you draw yourself in your comic strips different from yourself in real life?

Mitch: I don't think I do that anymore. That was a joke I made in *Nothing Nice to Say* a really long time ago. Basically I created a character designed for myself based on what I looked like at the second that I had drawn myself that day, and kept sticking to it, because in *Nothing Nice to Say* I wanted to keep the character designs consistent in the style of a newspaper comic—people never age, people never change their clothes. In my current autobiographical stuff I think I've altered my character designs enough to account for my weight and my fluctuating hairstyle.

Ben: I do want to make an aside note that Ray at *Maximum Rocknroll* just got our split zine and he's gonna review it in the same issue. So there will be a little focal point, a little refer-

Ben Snakepit

ence point, there for the people reading this interview. Please pick up the zine. I don't know why I'm plugging it, we don't have any more copies—we're fucking sold out of it. [laughter]

Mitch: As soon as you said that I was like, "are we gonna make some more or something?"

Ben: As soon as I can sneak more copies from work it will be available.

Mitch: Would you consider any other type of hobby, where you would invest such time and power, as you already have with comic art?

Ben: I would like to consider comics kind of beyond a hobby at this point. It's not really a hobby, it's kind of… my life's work. [laughter] Kind of the most important thing that I do. It's the thing that I hope that I will be remembered by for long after I'm gone. I hope that 50 years after I'm dead someone will find my book in a library and become interested in me and want to come visit my grave—like I went to visit Charles Bukowski's grave.

Mitch: Oh, wow.

Ben: That's how I see it, and maybe it's a little grandiose, or whatever, but, I mean, that's all I got. If I can't aim high… I gotta aim high.

Mitch: I love that. I don't think that that's grandiose, but I've struggled with that myself because… I used to think I'm creating a legacy that is greater than myself. But then I kind of think that even Shakespeare—and obviously no one in this van right now, nobody reading *Maximum Rocknroll* right now. I'm not comparing myself to Shakespeare—but, do you think in 200 years people will know who Shakespeare is? 300? 500? At some point our sun will go supernova and nothing will have ever mattered…

Ben: Correct.

Mitch: …I don't really know what my point was, beyond just trying to be a bummer. But is that what drives you, trying to create something that will live on beyond you?

Ben: I don't know if that's what drives me. It's what makes me feel OK about it, you know? When I go work at my shitty job every day and I clock in, and I sit and look at the dumpster and listen to Baloney Lady talk about whatever bullshit she's talking about, the thing that makes me feel OK is that I do something with my time. I do something creative. Especially with the kind of thing that I do—it's a snowball. It gets bigger and bigger and bigger and it will never get smaller as long as I continue to do it. It will always become a bigger, larger body of work. And my hope is that after I'm gone it will live on as a legacy, if it's for ten years, if it's for 20 years—however amount of time. As long as I do that, I feel that's all a human can do: contribute to the greater humankind. I figure I'm doing at least a tiny bit of that.

Mitch: I have my own question that I just thought of. Can your fans—and specifically, your fans that are friends with you on Facebook—ever look forward to a Baloney Lady book?

Ben: Yes. Baloney Lady book will definitely happen, but it has to be after I quit my job there, for obvious reasons. Think if you had a job, and you work with some person that you didn't like, and you made a *book* about them… you'd probably get into trouble if that book ever got found.

Mitch: Let me ask you another question, though. I feel like one of the greater mistakes I ever made when I started doing self-publishing, was that I should have come up with a pseudonym. Because it's too easy for my weird, normo coworkers to be like, "Oh my god, I looked you up on Wikipedia," or whatever.

Ben: Yeah. Right…

Mitch: And all of a sudden, it's weird.

Ben: Mmhmm.

Mitch: I wish that I had come up with Mitch Snakepit, or something. Do your co-workers actually know that you…

Ben: No.

Mitch: …have this comic?

Ben: Nuh uh. *Snakepit* is a complete secret to everyone at my job and I intend to keep it that way.

Mitch: You are *so* lucky.

Ben: I guess I can't say it was a preconceived thing—I didn't think of it at first. First I just wanted to have a punk name, you know, like Cometbus, or something cool. Snakepit worked because it was the name of the house I lived in—it had kind of a real connection. It just stuck. And I like it. I think it's kind of a cool punk name.

Mitch: It is!

Ben: But you know, whatever…

Ben: Did you ever try to work as an artist in any kind of different area besides the punk subculture?

Mitch: Yes. I applied for a job to be a graphic layout artist at Fantagraphics in Seattle, Washington and I received not so much as a polite "no thank you" via email.

Ben: Nothing?

Mitch: Nothing at all.

Ben: Brutal.

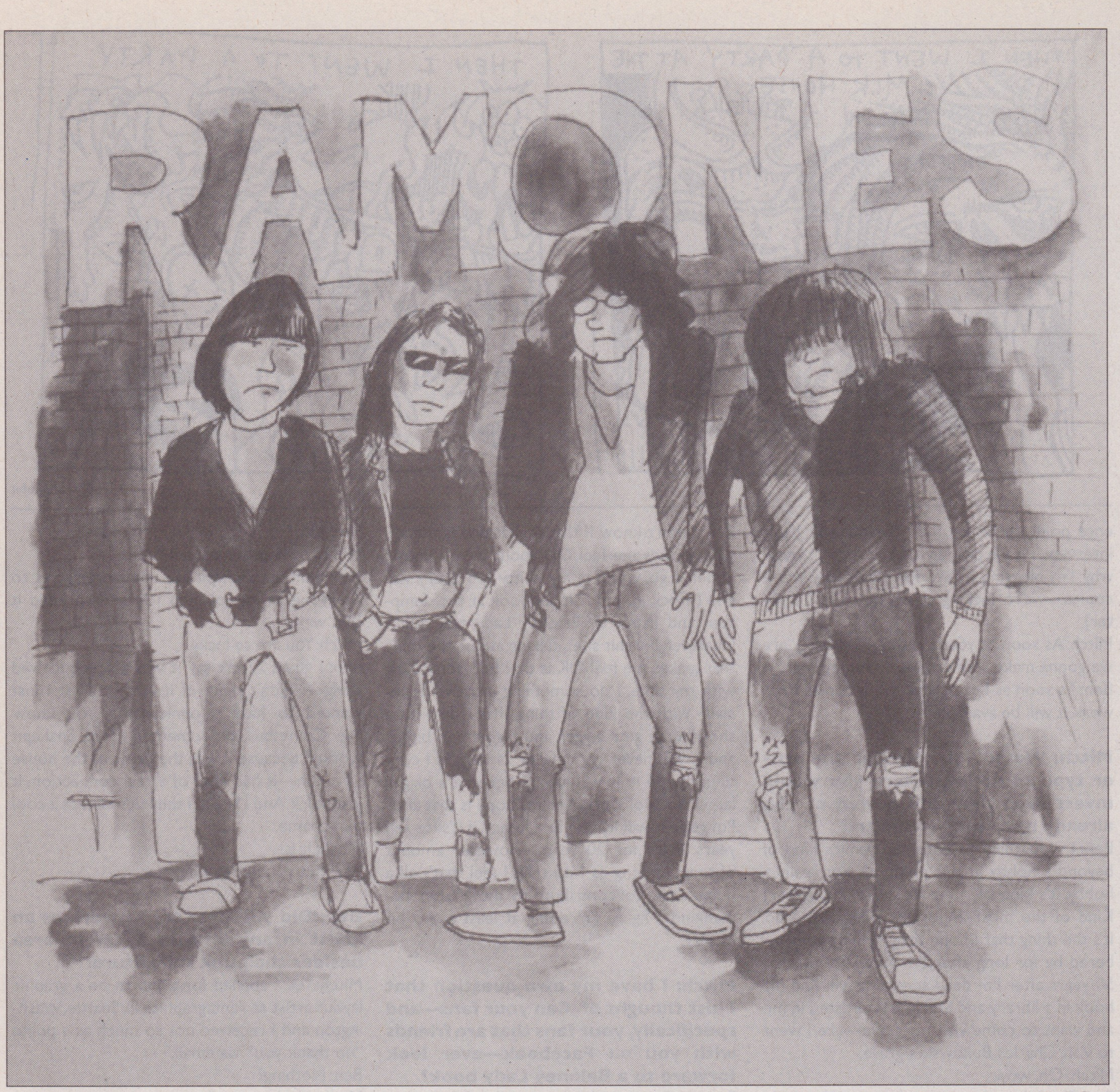
Mitch: It just would have been: use InDesign and Photoshop to lay out their books. That would have been the entire job. Sorry punk rock, I tried. I tried to run away as best I fucking could… but they keep pulling me back!

Ben: Do you personally know all the people that you draw in your comic strips?

Mitch: Nope! [laughter]

Ben: That's a weird question, but…

Mitch: You know—if I could ramble about this question, as I have about everything else—one of the other reasons *Nothing Nice to Say* has fallen so far to the wayside is because at some point I was making fun of bands that I didn't have a problem with. Like the Lawrence Arms, for instance. I'm even going to mention them



Collaboration between Ben Snakepit and Mitch Clem

again—I don't like the Lawrence Arms, but I don't have a fucking problem with them or anything. Some of my best friends are in bands that I don't like—you know what I mean?
Ben: Oh yes, oh yes…
Mitch: And it doesn't matter. And I felt that when I was using my voice predominantly to put down other bands, at some point that felt really shitty. So no, I don't know all those people but… thank god I don't know all those people. [laughter] I mean, Jesus Christ!

Mitch: Did you ever have problems with friends or family convincing you to stop doing art and live the life of a normal? What was your answer?
Ben: No, I've never really had that issue. My parents are pretty supportive. They're pretty open and cool with whatever I want to do and they've always been really supportive of me doing art and whatnot.
Mitch: I wish we could have worked in, somehow, your impression of the weird shit that your dad says…
Ben: There's no way to really convey that inflection.
Mitch: It wouldn't translate.
Ben: I think this band is done. We might have to wrap this up.
Mitch: Yeah… But I can get *more* longwinded, if you like.

Ben: It seems you are a rather dark/sad person…
Mitch: [laughter] This keeps coming up!
Ben: …why are your strips rather funny and ironical? Do you have any plans to draw a dark graphic novel?
Mitch: I do have plans to… Basically, there was, let's call it a solid one-year period of my life in recent history where everything went so horrifyingly off the rails that you wouldn't even believe it. And then at some point it occurred to me; well, if I'm supposedly writing about my life—and, apparently, there are no consequences to anything I could possibly say about myself in print—maybe it would be potentially interesting to cover this shit… oh shit, we're getting flagged down.
Ben: Yeah, I think we're done.
Mitch: End of interview!
Ben: Bye!

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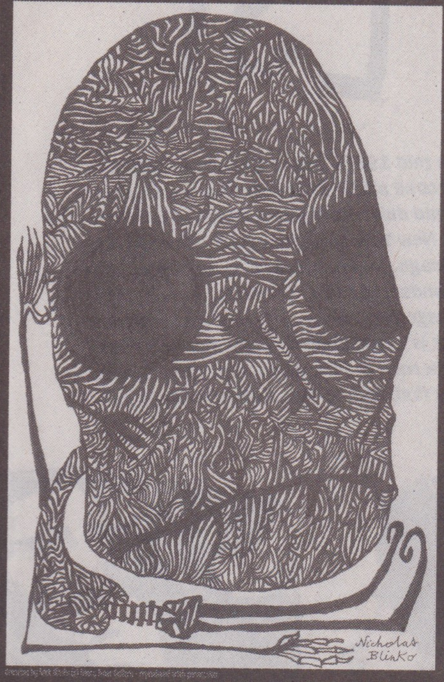

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FED UP FEST

There have always been gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans people in punk, but it wasn't until the mid 1980s where Queercore began to emerge as a loose affiliation of gay punks across North America and beyond. The Queercore scene started not only as a backlash response to the mainstream gay culture that arose during this time period but also to the bleak and dull hetero mindedness of hardcore and punk. Queer major cities started to pop up such as: Toronto, Ontario in Canada, Austin, TX, New York, NY, Chicago, IL. Chicago had Homocore, as well as SPEW, the Homographic Convergence at Randolph Street Gallery in Chicago. Queercore as a loose community started mostly through zines and writing, but then began to take other art forms including bands and films. Outpunk Records—first queer punk record label—began in 1992 and lasted until 1997. Fed Up Fest is a three-day transgender and queer punk and hardcore fest happening on July 25th, 26th, and 27th, 2014 in Chicago, Illinois. The goal of Fed Up Fest is to highlight transgender and queer voices in punk communities. Bands will be coming from all over the US for a weekend of punk rock music, workshops, and hangin' with cuties. This interview was conducted by Parks with members of various participants of the fest/Fed Up Fest Collective members. Intro by the Fed Up Fest Collective. Photos by Mary Vallon.

MRR: How did you decide who would play Fed Up Fest?

Ephran: We had a lot of submissions from a lot of great bands! Unfortunately, there just won't be enough time to have everyone perform. We first got rid of bands that had no queer or transgender members—allies are cool and all, but that's not what we're about. We're trying to highlight queer/transgender voices in punk and hardcore. Next, we chose bands that we felt represented punk and hardcore. Noise and folk-punk aren't exactly what we're looking for with this fest.

AVA: I decided to choose bands with empowering transgender or queer content in their music. Other important factors include musicians who identify as transgender or queer, because one of the primary focuses of this fest is to highlight transgender and queer folk in the DIY punx scene.

Suzy: Most of the bands that had applied were queer punk bands, so other than filtering out the non-queer and not-punk bands it was just about us liking the music. I liked most of the noise acts though.

MRR: How have your identities influenced your participation in Fed Up Fest?

Ephran: I think our identities are the reason it's happening. Going to shows and seeing the lack of queer content and representation was a bummer for me, personally. Sometimes I didn't feel comfortable in a space or I felt like I had to hide my queerness. It shouldn't be like that. That's not what punk is about.

Viva: I agree with Monkey. Until a year-and-a-half or so ago, I didn't feel welcome at shows. I didn't really feel represented and would downplay my identities to make more friends but recently I've met others who felt that way, and wanted something more.

Suzy: I feel unsafe/devalued/objectified in queer spaces as a transwoman (and a radical one at that)—maybe as Monkey and Viva feel in punk spaces—and I feel like without somebody in a space of, like, abjection (being rejected both by straights and by queers) it's important for me to be a part of decision making and organizing with Fed Up Fest lest it assume that queer scenes themselves are "safe." I didn't want to see something that had the potential to foster some sort of radical something turn into a shitshow of queer idealism.

MRR: Why are queer punk spaces important?

AVA: Transgender and queer punk spaces are important for a multitude of reasons: transgender individuals are underrepresented in the mainstream and the underground and resources for them are few and far between. A place for queer people to explore their sexuality, meet other queer folk and etc. in a comfortable and safe environment outside of the typical and inebriated gay bar scene is very important too.

Ephran: We live in a cis/het dominated world and punk, unfortunately, is no exception! Without safer space for queer/trans people, shows can be super alienating. Punk should be more accessible!

MRR: How are you all such babes?

Ephran: *'_'*

Suzy: No.

MRR: Is Fed Up Fest a queer exclusive space?

AVA: No, Fed Up Fest is not a transgender and queer exclusive space. Although we love having our transgender sisters and brothers and queer family to the front, our hearts are open to allies celebrating transgender and queer folk in the DIY punk scene with everyone!

Ephran: Fed Up Fest is open to people of all identities, as long as they aren't buttheads. We're not tolerating bullshit. Fuck up, and you're out.

MRR: What kind of work went into organizing Fed Up Fest?

AVA: So far, we've had many benefit shows, such as some friends in California, who raised a little over half a grand in do-

nations for the fest, we've had plenty of benefit shows here in Chicago, like variety shows, a rock lotto gig and even selling merch at shows and online at fedupfest.bigcartel.com, and sweethearts who helped out with Smash It Dead Fest in Massachusetts even raised donations by selling posters. Other efforts include bake sales and the obvious internet promotion on tumblr and facebook and getting together with the Fed Up Fest collective to brainstorm ideas and distribute networking tasks and etc. DIY forever, baby!
Ephran: People can contact us if they want to volunteer at the fest this summer. chicagoqueercore@gmail.com

MRR: What are your long-term dreams for Fed Up Fest?
AVA: Our long term dreams for Fed Up Fest are for it to become a staple in Chicago as an annual DIY punk rock music fest. We also hope that Fed Up fest will have a positive effect on the transgender and queer subscribers in the punk scene.

MRR: How has punk influenced y'all as queer folks?
AVA: Punk has a tremendous influence on me. I'm lucky to be welcomed into a QPOC scene with open arms. I live in a QPOC punk house and I'm constantly surrounded by lovely and caring individuals. Without trying to come off as over-dramatic, I really don't know where I'd be without punk... <3
Ephran: Punk changed my life. Punks have been the most accepting people, from inviting me to hang out with them as a kid, when I was just a little nerd, to now, when we're all organizing this fest together. The first people I ever came out to were punks. I don't know what I'd even be like if punk wasn't part of my life.
Viva: When I was growing up, I was really ashamed and scared of being queer. But then I started going to shows and realizing that there were other people who felt that way. Punk is what made me the person am I now, and without it I would probably still be scared and nervous to be anything other than what people want me to be. It's given me and so many people a voice and a chance to be heard.
Suzy: That's a huge question. Punk has been the site of a lot of growth and unlearning, a lot of abuse, how I came into anarchy, how I first met other trans women, and a lot of anger and a lot of ecstasy. Whether learning from or reacting against what I've seen and lived with in punk, it's probably been the most important thing in my life and I wouldn't be the same dyke without it.

For more info about Fed Up Fest, visit www.fedupfestchicago.org.

MRR: Why Chicago?
Ephran: Because we live here! Chicago is a huge city with a lot of queer and trans people. When I did stuff in anarchist circles here, I found that most of the anarchists identified as queer... A lot of other cities' scenes aren't like that.
AVA: As much as I know of Chicago, we've had great things bloom here, like Martin Sorrondeguy of Los Crudos/Limp Wrist. One of my favorite bands, Condenada, formed here. The fabulous Bromance and Lechuza held it up here for a while... There have been great efforts from QPOC organizers like Donte and Monica who started Black N Brown Punx Fest. Chicago is definitely a progressive city with a lot of potential for transgender and queer folk.
Viva: I've lived here all of my life and have been going to shows here for a few years. I think Chicago needs this. I've seen the Chicago Queercore scene grow in such positive community and I think queer punx need to pat each other on the back and thank each other for coming out to and making the scene what it is.

Parks is really into Sex Ed, golden retrievers, and hopes to be a stay at home parent someday.

AVA is a QPOC (Queer Person of Color) musician, activist and hip-shaking vegan.

Ephran "Monkey" Ramirez is a QPOC, anarchist, activist, drug-free, vegan, board game-collecting nerd.

Viva Galindo is a queer Xicana, activist, artist, vegan, pizza lover and doggie owner.

Suzy is a young woman and is very fragile <3

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RAT DAMAGE

CYRIL: BASS | THOMAS: GUITAR | JASON: DRUMS | JAY: GUITAR | KEN: VOCALS

JAY STARTS THE INTERVIEW OFF BY SHOTGUNNING A BEER. LET'S GET THIS INTERVIEW OVER WITH.

MRR: How long have you been a band and how did you get together?
Ken: It will be five years next month. Jesus Christ… It started with Antibodies. Right? Was that the name of the band?
Cyril: Yeah, you booked a band called Antibodies that Jason and I where in.
Ken: There was another guy named Patrick in the band at the very beginning.
Cyril: Patrick played our first show at Silk Club with Fyfan and Annihilation Time and Night Stick Justice in 2008.
Ken: Then we were a four piece for three years, then Thomas joined and… thank god.

MRR: How did you meet Thomas?
Cyril: When we recorded *Pre Cursed* two years ago, our good friend Jeff Davis, who is no longer with us, recorded the album. When we were doing the album, he had Jay overdub some rhythm parts and it just sounded really thick and more complete.

MRR: So, before you even decided on Thomas, you knew you wanted another guitarist in the band?
Cyril: Yeah.

MRR: Did you try anyone else out?
Cyril: No. We just thought, "Tommy should play with us," and that was it.

MRR: Where you in another band at the time, Thomas?
Thomas: Yeah, I was in another band called Master Leather Daddy.
Ken: I've known Tommy for a long time. Jay has known him for a long time. I just asked him if he wanted to play guitar with us. He seemed to be into it.

MRR: You mentioned *Pre Cursed*. Did you record something else before you recorded the LP, *Cursed*?
Cyril: Yeah, we did… how many songs?
Jason: Four or five on the tape.

MRR: So, *Pre Cursed* is a tape release?
Cyril: Yeah. We recorded the tape a few years ago. Then Tommy joined the band, so we rerecorded those songs and added more to it. That is how we ended up with the LP, *cursed*.
Ken: Yeah, the LP came out at that Forward show with you guys [RAD], the Scowndrolls, and Violation.

MRR: Who recorded the LP?
Ken: Jeff "Leppard" Davis, aka the Wizard—who was actually killed in a motorcycle accident the night that we released the LP. It was pretty fucked up.

MRR: Did you record with him in San Francisco?
Ken: Yeah at Lennon Studios.

MRR: How did that go?
Ken: Oh, it was amazing.
Jason: Jeff was like the sixth member of the band.
Cyril: It was a perfect experience… both times.
Jason: He would always pull good performances out of us and could mix it right.

MRR: How did he pull good performances out of you?
Cyril: He was just a friend, you know.
Jason: He had a nice way of telling you if something didn't work out. Like, he would say, "Yeah, that was good, but maybe you could do it just a little bit better and if it doesn't work out, we could save the other take."
Ken: It wasn't just a recording with him. We would go down and spend the weekend with him and Nikki and we would just hang out and party. It was good times. The world is a more fucked place without him.
All: Yeah.

MRR: Who did the art work?
Cyril: A good friend of mine, Pat Kim. He is a tattoo artist at Adora Tattoo in San Diego now. He was the bass player in Unwritten Law for many years, so that was his job. He left that band and had to get a job to support the family other than doing music and touring. He is one of the best people on the earth. I can't say enough good things about that guy.
Ken: The insert artwork was done by Jeremiah Pfeifer.
Jay: He makes good burgers. He works at Hot Rods.

MRR: Who came up with the idea to have the limited edition glass cover? I've never seen that anywhere, ever.
Jason: What's even better is, how long did it take before we started getting pictures of people doing drugs off of it? About a half hour.
Jay: Mine is all scraped up. I lost most of the artwork off of it. I have half of a face left on mine.
Ken: That was my stupid ass idea.

MRR: Where did you come up with the idea? What made you think of it?
Ken: Because I couldn't figure out how to do wood—but that's next.
Jason: The thing is, we are trying to get the record to be wood, too. Apparently it's not compatible with record players.
Cyril: It keeps catching fire.
Jay: On one side you can play music and on the other side you can just do drugs off of it.
Ken: I don't know if this will be a Rat Damage release, but Cyril and I and a friend of ours, Rhino, run a record label so some release [in the future] will have a wood cover.

MRR: What is the name of your record label?
Ken: F.Y.B.S. Records.

MRR: You guys have gotten to play on a lot of big shows, not just here in Sacramento, but all over. How did you get on so many great shows?
Ken: Just ask.
Cyril: Yeah, Ken just booked them all. [laughs]
MRR: Ken, you do bring a lot of great bands through Sacramento. How do you do it?
Ken: Because I'm a dick and I put my own band on every cool show (laughs).

MRR: Really though. How do you convince a band like Forward to play in our town, in a basement?
Ken: I don't have to convince people to do it. I've been booking shows long enough that now I have friends that trust me. So, when it came to Forward, it was Robert (Conquest for Death, No Statik, Fuckface, etc.) who was driving them. He suggested that they play here in Sacramento…
Cyril: Basically, they all call Ken. Ken's phone rings more than a Jerry Lewis telethon.

MRR: What other bands have you guys been in?
Cyril: I was in a band called Officer Down in San Francisco for a handful of years before I moved here and started the Antibodies, which was a Craigslist band since I didn't know anybody in Sacramento.

MRR: You put an ad on Craigslist for a band?
Cyril: I did and I met a bunch of strangers who are now my brothers.

MRR: Thomas, what about you?
Thomas: Beyond Master Leather Daddy, I was in a band called Cowboy Killer in the early to mid 2000s. It was rocking fast grindcore stuff. Then, after that, was Werewolf, which eventually turned into Master Leather Daddy. That band was more along the lines of black metal stuff. I'm also, currently in a band called 30.6 [thirty-ought-six].
Jay: 30 hot chicks….

MRR: Jason, what about you?
Jason: I replied to a Craigslist ad.

MRR: Is Antibodies the only other band you've ever been in?
Jason: No. I sat in for this band called the Beats while they were looking for another drummer. Before that, I was just in a bunch of psychedelic bands.

MRR: Does that mean you weren't into this genre before the Antibodies?
Jason: Well, I just didn't know anybody who played harder music. These guys got me into playing harder music instead of just 30-minute jams about wizards. Not that I have anything against 30-minute jams about wizards.

MRR: Jay, what about you?
Jay: I was in a band called Outgunned. I was in a band with Jason called Purple Frost. I was in some fake bands like Potato Foreskin and the Grim Raper and Sober X Up and some other fake bands.

MRR: How long did these bands last?
Jay: Those were fake bands. Some of them have recordings in my personal collection. Oh, yeah, I was also in this other band called Drug Apartments that was pretty sweet. We played some '70s stoner rock. We'd get high and eat burritos and listen to Deep Purple.

MRR: Which of these bands were real?
Jay: Outgunned was real. Purple Frost was real. Drug Apartments was definitely real. We never made it out of the basement, though.
Cyril: You played with that band from Tracy for a little bit.
Jay: Oh, yeah. I filled in for Catch Hell while their bass player was in prison.

MRR: Ken, what about you?
Ken: Furious George, Liplock, Bored to Death and some shit that doesn't matter before I started Rat Damage.

MRR: I wanted to talk about how you got the LP funded. You started an Indie-a-go-go campaign to help get the record funded.
Ken: There's a lot of fucking backlash about bands doing that, I've noticed lately.
Cyril: Really? Why?
Ken: I don't know.
Jay: Haters.
Ken: We are a bunch of broke-ass motherfuckers. People donated small amounts, which we were very appreciative of.
Jason: It was more of a presale.
Jay: Don't lie. It was funded with illegal drug money.
Ken: There were people who actually bought hand-made, personalized covers. They requested which band member they wanted to make the cover.
Cyril: Aside from the Indie-a-go-go thing, Ken and I and Rhino's label funded it with a lot of eBay auctions.

MRR: So, F.Y.B.S. actually finished covering the cost of the record?
Ken: Oh, we didn't even come close to meeting the cost on Indie-a-go-go. We only got about $800 dollars from that. Jay wasn't exactly lying when he said it was illegal drugs.
Jason: Don't incriminate us.
Ken: I know there were illegal firework sales involved. I don't know. There were a lot of criminal activities that went into getting that record made, let's put it that way [laughs].

MRR: Let's talk about tour.
Cyril: Our tours are about a weeklong at best, so they are like mini outings.

MRR: Do you have any favorite moments that stand out? Any memorable experiences?
Cyril: The year before last, it was amazing that we didn't get pulled over. We were on tour with Tommy's other band 30.6. There were copious amounts of fun times in the van while we were driving to new destinations. Beer bottles and cans were falling out at busy gas stations…
Jay: I'd say it was amazing we didn't die.
Thomas: Didn't we almost hit a bear?
Jay: No. The bear almost hit us.
Cyril: We were coming back from Washington to Oregon. We didn't want to go through Grant Pass, so we took an eastern route through the mountains, which was almost a mistake. Anyway, we were driving down the street, going about 70 in broad daylight, and we look to the right and see this, sort of, black thing in our peripheral vision. We look over and it's a fucking black bear in a full gallop, in broad daylight, heading toward the freeway. It kept coming our way. Spoog, the dude driving at the time, had to go into the oncoming lane:

Thank goodness there was not traffic, because this bear was still at a full gallop. It was like *National Geographic*. Its fur was fucking flying. It was like in slow motion.
Ken: There has been a lot of funny, stupid shit on tour.

MRR: What about you Thomas, do you have any good tour stories?
Thomas: Well, most of the time, tour is just a blur to me.
Jay: What about when you had your birthday?
Thomas: I don't remember that.
Jay: We were in Portland. There was so much going on. I just remember this dude [points to Thomas] was just stumbling around so wasted.

MRR: You don't remember that?
Thomas: No [laughs].

MRR: It must have been a good night then.
Ken: Portland, last year, was wacky. I wiped vomit on some people that wanted to take a picture with me. I didn't realize I had done it until I saw them walk away and saw the vomit on the back of them. We stayed at Ian from Bi-Marks' house. Jason and I went on a mission to go get burritos. Ian gave us directions, but he left out one important turn. I don't know where the fuck we were, but we were wandering around, wasted in Portland at three in the fucking morning.

Then, I got this thing called Cheesus which is a burger, but instead of a bun, it has two grilled cheese sandwiches. It happened to be almost 100 fucking degrees in Portland that day. We were on a mission to get Cyril his Crown.
Cyril: That's right, they didn't have regular liquor stores there. You had to go to a state liquor store. We had to walk like three fucking miles so I could get my crown.
Ken: I had gotten the Cheesus on the way and it was churning in my stomach. I was feeling pretty bad. It is like the worst thing to eat when it is that hot. By the time we got there, I didn't want to make the walk all the way back. We tried to get a cab, but there were all kinds of issues.

So, we are sitting outside of the liquor store when this lady walks by. All I'm thinking at this time is how I just want to get back to this place we are staying and I don't want to fucking walk all the way back. So, as she walks by, without using my brain I say, "Hey, how would you like to make an easy ten bucks?"
Cyril: What a dirt bag. I looked at him, and I was like, "You are a fucking asshole."
Ken: All of these guys turned and looked at me like I was the biggest piece of shit and I was like, "What?" and then, I was like, "Oh..." It was one of my lowest moron moments. All I was asking is if she would take ten bucks to drive us back to the place we were staying. I'm sure she is not reading this, but lady, if you are reading this right now, I am so sorry about that.

MRR: What about favorite cities. What is the one city you'd love to go back to every time on tour if you could?
Jason: Probably Seattle.
Jay: Portland.
Thomas: I'd have to say Seattle.
Cyril: Santa Rosa was great.

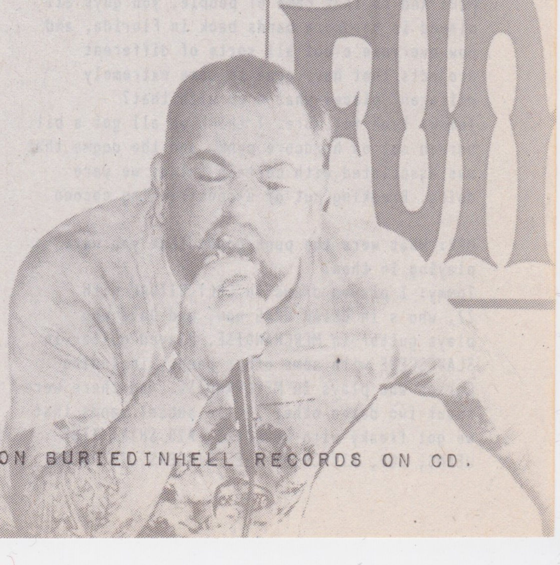
MRR: Where did you play in Santa Rosa?
Cyril: We played at this pizza place. See, all I care about is food. Really, every place we've played has been very accommodating.
Ken: Fuck yeah, even when the shows have been "ca-ca," the people have been fucking rad. The kids from Bend, Oregon are fucking great kids and they know how to party.
Jay: Especially because we are a bunch of shitheads. I don't know how people can handle us.

MRR: Any upcoming tour plans?
Ken: We are planning to do the Pacific Northwest again.

MRR: The cooler states.
Ken: I think that's why we do it. It is like a weeklong break when we can get out of Sacramento because it is so fucking hot here.

MRR: Early on, you seemed to be heavily influenced by bands like Black Flag in your music, but that doesn't seem to be the case anymore. You've added a lot of metal riffs and have a heavier, darker sound.
Jason: Jeff Leppard called us "Negative Rock."
Cyril: What I would say is listen to the record and make up your mind.
Jay: I don't really care about that. I like the dead boys and shit. It's just rock and metal and pop just rolled up together. I don't give a fuck about scenes and genres and shit like that.
Cyril: That's what is cool about writing music with this band. We just write whatever feels right. It's not like we are trying to fit it into a certain thing. It just comes out right. If it doesn't or if we are not having fun playing it, we just forget about it.

MRR: Do you guys having anything else you want to add? Jay, I know you have something to say. I can see it in your eyes.
Jay: Get fucked up.



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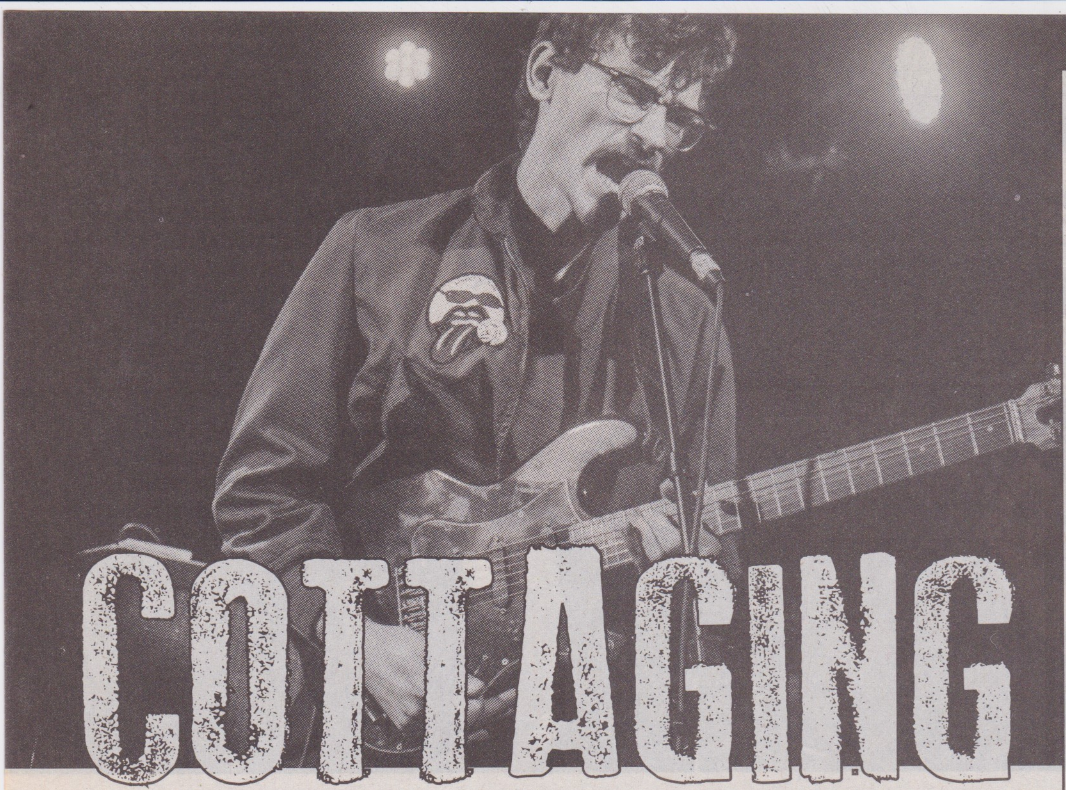


COTTAGING

Maladjusted and misplaced, the universal sound of alienation. It doesn't come from boutique equipment or from being well versed at creating a persona. It's a natural knack at not being liked but simultaneously not being a sucker, the nasal drip of society. There is a certain curiosity that accompanies confusion, when you meet your maker, smell their breath and realize the condemned wield nasty fangs that turn your posture to pudding. Conversation is civil, the best advice you could find is in the sewer and the truth will always stain. This interview was initially aired on my weekly hardcore punk radio show, Distort Jersey City on WFMU, which is every Tuesday 7-8pm EST. You can listen to a live session from Cottaging that accompanied this interview at wfmu.org/playlists/shows/54224. Interview by ZZ Ramirez. Photos by Eric Phipps and Reed Dunlea.

MRR: You met in Boston and now live in Providence, and two of you are originally from Florida. Can you talk a little bit about what it's like to be with a crew of people who play music together, and to move around to completely different cities and start bands in those places? What do you think about space and location and music and how that effects who you are as a band?

Tommy: The provincial sound. I think it makes a big difference, especially in a sprawling place like the US. There're so many regions and some areas facilitate what you do more than others. Hence why we don't live in Florida, for the most part.

Brian: Florida's climate socially, musically and otherwise is a really specific breed. Sometimes that's great, other times it can be rather oppressive. Tommy happened to be in a camp of people who were playing more interesting music to me, and that's how we met. And we kind of teamed up a few years ago, just being buds and hanging out. Moving to Boston taught us a fair amount about the way we work, imbibe, play music, exorcise demons, etc.-and that some things don't change no matter where you are.

Tommy: That being said, what we did back then was intense and equally as ephemeral.

MRR: And so that camp of people, you guys all played in hardcore bands back in Florida, and now everyone's got all sorts of different projects that have gone to some extremely different places-what's up with that?

Tommy: Yeah for sure. I think we all got a bit burned out on hardcore punk, and the dogma that was associated with certain things we were doing. Breaking out of a constricting cocoon

MRR: What were the punk bands that you were playing in then?

Tommy: I played drums in CULT RITUAL with ZZ, who's in UKIAH DRAG now, and Dave who plays guitar in MERCHANDISE. Played guitar in SLAVESCENE with some other peeps, including Carson who plays in MERCHANDISE. And there were about two dozen other little subset bands that we got freaky with-BOULDERS, BIG SHIRT TINY JEANS, COP, ATTACK OF THE CHIGGERS, INTRO TO CUTTING UP MEN, ad nauseam.

Brian: I played in a rock band called DIET COKEHEADS. We used to play shows with CULT RITUAL, SLAVESCENE, NEON BLUD, and company.

MRR: So then you guys got bored with that and started doing other stuff?

Tommy: Yeah all kinds of stuff. After the last CULT RITUAL tour we were quite burned out and wanted to move on-maybe we felt like we were taking the crow's route creatively, and, yeah, just got to wandering, and started...

Brian: Executing things in a less traditional vein.

Tommy: [whispering] Started taking drugs.

MRR: You guys were straightedge when you were playing hardcore music?

Tommy: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah! All of us-except David Vassalotti. That was a part of our anger, our contempt. We'll never fit in but it's a lot easier to write scathing music when you're geographically and socially isolated-which happens in a place like Tampa if you're an edger. We weren't like, X'ed up or anything. We just didn't want to do drugs or be a part of any of that. And then it changed as we got older-surprise.

MRR: Who had the funniest edge break?

Tommy: Oh me, definitely. I took three tabs of LSD when I was 20. Right after the CULT RITUAL tour-that last coffin nail! It was a pretty profound experience. Cliché, I know.

MRR: Was that the first time you had done drugs?

Tommy: More or less. I'd smoked dope for a toothache when I was a kid because my dad said I would stop puking blood.

MRR: Yeah, three hits on the first go is pretty serious.

Tommy: Yeah. We all used to live in Tampa's red light district-off Nebraska Avenue-and ZZ took me around the neighborhood. I recall being very upset at some transvestite hookers for hanging outside of a mortuary. Then we broke into graveyards and talked round the dead.

MRR: And so how did you guys find Aaron? How did that go down?

Brian: We were hanging out...

Tommy: We were commiserating.

Brian: We were commiserating at a punk show in Boston.

Aaron: I think it was a black metal show.

Brian: So we were commiserating at a black metal show in Boston. And we were all kind of sulking in the corner together.

Aaron: I had met their friend Samantha in Chicago when I was trying to ditch Boston.

Tommy: Samantha played bass in SLAVESCENE and NEON BLUD-another Tampa cat.

Brian: Most of us flee...

Aaron: And she was like, "oh my friends Brian and Tommy moved to Boston, you should hang out with them." Then about two weeks later I saw them at that black metal show. It was that California or Mexico group of bands.

Tommy: VOLAHN.

MRR: Oh yeah they played here too, with BLACK TWILIGHT CIRCLE.

Tommy: Yeah it was a cool show but we were all definitely sniffing our farts in the dark. Typical Boston showgoing. Drinking 30-year-old whiskey I had found in our basement with a hunting spear that week. Meeting this creep.

Aaron: Sam had shown me pictures of Tommy.

[Laughter]

Tommy: He was drooling okay?!

Aaron: Like yeah there's this weird six-foot tall, really stringy guy in the corner. Hi.

[Laughter]

MRR: And the rest is history.

Tommy: The rest is history!

Aaron: And then they followed me to Providence.

Tommy: Yeah.

Brian: Yup.

MRR: Why did you guys name your band COTTAGING?

Tommy: I'll give The Sultan the microphone for this one.

Brian: Cottaging is a term used in Britain for men who are looking to get their rocks off anonymously, in what are referred to as cottages. They're abandoned bathrooms in woodsy areas, usually. Dudes post up at glory holes and do their thing. It's called cottaging in Britain, and it's called cruising here.
Tommy: It makes a great google search when you're interested in our band. Sorry SEX/VID

MRR: What's the best show and the worst show that COTTAGING has played?
Brian: On this tour, my favorite show was the one we played in New York actually, with DESTRUCTION UNIT and...
Aaron: CRYSTALLINE ROSES. And some other band with the guy who worked at Sound Garden in Syracuse.
Brian: That was really fun on this tour specifically. Worst show? Our first show I broke my kick pedal.
Tommy: In half!
Brian: Yeah I broke it in half on our first song, so that was kind of embarrassing and unfortunate. Total momentum killer.
Aaron: That was at the same venue that we met, at the Starlab in Somerville.
Brian: Yeah it was.
Aaron: I really liked playing Harrisonburg, Virginia.
Tommy: Harrisonburg was a blast! We played with the no wave gravers SEDIMENT CLUB and the widow-making NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS, both from the North. Which is awesome playing with Yankee bands in the south. It makes me feel much better.
Aaron: And there was CANDIDATE DEMO who I was psyched to play with, which is Billy from BUCK GOOTER. He set up the show for us. And Tommy got detained by police there.
Tommy: Oh yeah! [laughter] Oh that was great.

MRR: Just detained though? You were all good?
Tommy: I got busted red-handed shooting bottle rockets with this Mexican skateboarder kid named Gustavo. It was a trip. The cops loved him. He wouldn't stop talking
Aaron: He didn't have his license on him and couldn't remember his social security number.

MRR: Maybe moving back a little bit, what are your go-to drugs to take while on tour?
Brian: Go-to? I've been ingesting a fair amount of marijuana on this particular trip. THC capsules and a brownie a friend gave me. Suffice to say my rides in the van have been particularly zonked out.

MRR: What's a THC capsule?
Brian: Um, Aaron do you want to talk about this?
Aaron: Is this incriminating?

MRR: We're just talking about an "art project".
Aaron: It's just an art project. I have a friend who lives in San Diego. He has a medicinal marijuana card, and every time I go out there we like to peruse the menus of these places.
Tommy: You mean the novel crap vipers buy with their lunch money?
Aaron: Yeah. And you're like, "oh I can take that back on the plane with me." I've had jolly ranchers before. I've been hanging out with this cheeba chew thing.
Brian: It's a marijuana tootsie roll, for those inquiring.
Aaron: I kind of just drink on tour, because it's easy and cheap and free sometimes.
Tommy: I would say my favorite drugs are the women, the wild women, the ripping and the tearing, but especially the women. And a little bit of s-p-e-d.

MRR: A little bit of sped.
[Laughter]
Tommy: Past tense.

MRR: What do you guys have coming up, whether it's this band or other bands? What are the plans for the near future?
Brian: I believe Aaron's band is doing a little jaunt next month?
Aaron: Yes I'm playing your house [538 Johnson in Brooklyn] with LIBYANS.

MRR: Well look at that. LIBYANS is a band?
Aaron: LIBYANS is a band.

MRR: I didn't know that. When's the last time you guys played a show?
Aaron: Around this time last year. We put out an album and are kind of just doing some intermittent shows. I think we're playing five shows in New England. And then in March we're playing some shows in the Midwest, supporting an album that Daniel from Sorry State put out.

MRR: Is it true that you took out Marcus's guitar part when you sold your song to, uh, garage, what is that thing called?
Aaron: I worked for this place Harmonix that did the Rock Band games.

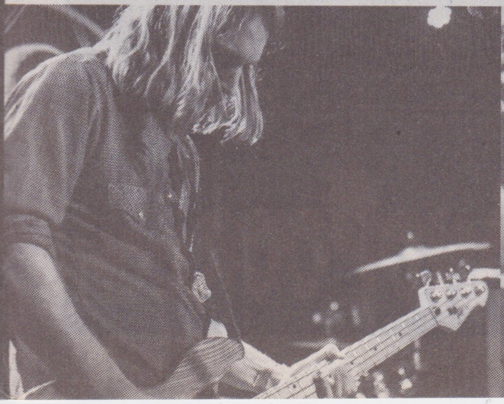
MRR: So you're the reason it's on there?
Aaron: Yeah. It's like, if I worked at Kinko's I would have made free photocopies, but I had the opportunity to put it in that game.

MRR: And is "Welcome to the Neighborhood" the song?
Aaron: Yeah. It's this song that I don't really like.
[Laughter]
Tommy: It stinks!
Aaron: Yeah it's not my favorite, and I don't ever want to play it or hear it again. But it's even better that we took out Marcus Benamati's guitar part, because Kevin Gebo who recorded

it and ended up playing guitar in LIBYANS was like, "oh we can't have that guy's guitar thing on there." So Gebo wrote this pop guitar solo thing, and that went into the dumb game. It's an even dumber part. I don't know. That whole thing is rather embarrassing at this point. When people are like, oh you're in that band that's in Rock Band! And I'm like, yeah...
Tommy: LIBYANS on tour next month!
Aaron: Come see us! As featured in Rock Band 2!
Tommy: Brian and I play in a band called UKIAH DRAG. We actually switch instruments. The first week of March we're touring the northeast with the MEN, our good, good friends. It's gonna to be a killer time.
Brian: Rock'n'roll music.
Tommy: Rock'n'roll music. After that I think COTTAGING might do a weekend with our buds in PSYCHIC BLOOD, a Western Mass psycho-punk band. And after that UKIAH DRAG's gonna go on tour again hopefully with our buds in MERCHANDISE. I think that might work out.
Brian: Yeah, a handful of tours coming up for all of us I guess.
Tommy: Yeah it's gonna be a busy year. No doubt.

MRR: Does that mean COTTAGING goes on the back burner for a minute?
Tommy: It's more of a ping-pong affair. Both bands practice pretty diligently to do what we do.
Brian: All of UKIAH DRAG live together, well, kind of live together at this point, so we can practice with some regularity. And Aaron doesn't live very far from us so COTTAGING can also practice pretty easily.

MRR: Any last comments or shout outs?
Tommy: Yeah Doug and Trip Warner, both the coolest Warner Brothers I know. Mr Marc Gonya from Abscess Records. All the killer bands we played with this tour: CAVES CAVERNS, CANDIDATE DEMO, SEDIMENT CLUB, the PATRIOTS.
Brian: WHATEVER BRAINS were really good.
Tommy: WHATEVER BRAINS were killer in North Carolina. DAN IVAN.
Brian: DAN IVAN and NICK KLEIN are on their A-game right now. You would be foolish not to catch them.
Tommy: NICK KLEIN. The almighty.
Aaron: Whoever booked a show or let us stay at their house.
Brian: Yeah it's been a grand time.
Aaron: It's very much appreciated. Maybe there's a new COTTAGING album in 2014. This year. A twelve-inch of some sort.
Brian: Perhaps.
Tommy: I've got your twelve-inch hangin'.



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Damn Broads

Damn Broads! is an all-female three-piece punk band from Connecticut. They have a unique sound. They're influenced by all kinds of punk rock, street punk, Oi! and ska. They've been compared to the Pist and Black Flag. They have also been called the girl version of Minor Threat. The band formed in May 2010 and have been kicking ass and taking names since then. There is Michelle Threat on bass, Crazines on guitar, TayToxic on drums and all of them alternate on vocals. They are a band that happens to consist of all girls but don't let their gender fool you, they are not a girl band. They are a punk band. Interview and photos by Alyssa Busch Dodd.

MRR: Generic interview question...what are some your musical influences?
Just like every other band, we all have our own separate influences. Some more well known bands we can all agree on are Rancid, the Casualties and Minor Threat. However, our music is mostly influenced by local bands that we play with. There are some pretty amazing bands that have come out of Connecticut and New England as a whole, such as the Pist, Copyright Chaos and Cry Havoc! We would say our friends' bands are our main influences.

MRR: Besides music, what are some of your other interests?
We like to hang out and eat really unhealthy food like bread bowls and al freddo pizza, usually while playing Pokémon Snap on Nintendo 64, or watching horror movies or shows about puppies and kittens. Sometimes we skip our weekly practice to take trips to pet stores and look at all of the cute animals. When the weather is nice we like to play with fireworks. Luckily we haven't blown off any of our appendages yet or set fire to any nearby houses. There have been some pretty close calls though. We also go metal detecting in the hopes that we will find something valuable enough to allow us to quit our jobs, buy a van and go on tour for the rest of our lives.

MRR: How did you ladies all get together?
Surprisingly, we met on Craigslist. TayToxic and Crazines posted an ad looking for a bassist and singer for an all female punk band. Sisters Riley Reject and Michelle Threat responded to the ad and were interested in trying out. Their parents were more hesitant than interested. They actually escorted them to their audition because TayToxic and Crazines could have been seductive internet predators and/or murderers. Luckily they weren't.

MRR: You mentioned your ex-vocalist Riley Reject...Where did she go?!
Riley was with us for about two and a half years. She was there from the start of the band and she's still important to us. People always ask if she left on bad terms, but it was nothing like that at all. It was just something she had to do to move on to bigger and better things, and we support her no matter what decisions she makes. We are still good friends, and she makes it out to our shows once and a while. Sometimes we have *Golden Girl* marathon nights with her also, which need to happen more frequently Riley Reject!

MRR: After losing your front person, how has the band dynamic changed?

We were really sad to see Riley go, but we decided that if we couldn't have her, we didn't want anyone else. We've reinvented ourselves. It's like we're a completely different band now, one that we have become pretty proud of. Everything has changed from how we write our songs to how we play shows. Riley used to take care of most of our lyrics, so writing is more of a collaboration now than it ever has been. We work on lyrics together and build off of each other's ideas...and we discovered that Michelle Threat is a syllable Nazi. Not that that's a bad thing, there needs to be at least one of them in any band. We all had to learn to play and sing at the same time, which makes playing shows a lot more difficult. We need to pay really close attention to each other on stage because we switch vocals constantly. We've definitely made some mistakes and had some bumps in the road getting to where we are now, but we've grown and learned from the whole experience. It has definitely brought the three of us a lot closer.

MRR: How often do you play shows? Where have you played?

We try to play shows constantly. We just came back from Philadelphia and Brooklyn this past weekend, and we play all around New England pretty often. Normally we play out around three to five times a month. We did a tour last summer and made it to Massachusetts, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York and Rhode Island. Our next big trip will be to California for a long weekend in December. After that, we are planning to release our new CD and hopefully tour next March down the East Coast to Florida.

MRR: Where was the best place you played while on tour?

Tour was really fun and it's tough to decide, but our favorite was a basement show in Baltimore, Maryland at a house called Hellzapoppin. The people there were so nice to us and went out of their way to make us feel comfortable. They gathered change to buy us beer and offered us a place to stay for the night. The crowd there was awesome and had so much energy! The place was packed. That might have been because it was a small room, but big stages are overrated anyway. It would be great to play there again if we're in the area.

MRR: So you prefer smaller venues rather than larger ones?

Absolutely! The sound is definitely better in smaller venues, and they are obviously more packed than larger ones. People are forced to stand up front. They have no choice. There is a lot more energy in smaller venues and there is more of a community in each one. It's more intimate, and it takes less time to clear out once they hear us.

MRR: After listening to your music, you broads seem really angry. Do you ladies need anger management?

Maybe, we aren't really angry people though. We realize that pretty much all of our songs are about things we hate, but it's probably just because those are the things we're the most passionate about. There are plenty of things to be happy about, but whenever we sit down and try to write a song about positive things nothing good comes out of it. Maybe someday we'll come out with a happy song about love, puppies and rainbows, but don't hold your breath. As great as those things are, the subjects that matter most to us are things like injustice in the music scene, society and the world as a whole. That's what most of our songs end up being about.

MRR: One of your songs about the music scene is called "Pay to Play." For those of us who are unfamiliar with them, what's so bad about pay-to-play shows?

This is one of our most important songs. Most bands can relate to the lyrics. Basically, Pay-to-Play is about promoters who exploit little known bands for their own selfish purposes. For bands like us, it's hard to turn down offers for shows with amazing headliners. We used to be willing to sell tickets to those shows, knowing that we wouldn't be able to sell the minimum amount required. Selling 25 to 50 tickets for any given show is hard, no matter how many friends your band has. In the end, we always ended up buying the remaining tickets with our own money, because if we didn't pay the promoters back in full they could kick us off the show. We don't do that anymore, and we encourage other bands not to either. We believe that bands shouldn't ever have to sell tickets to their own shows. That's the promoter's and/or venue's job. If the lineup is good enough, people will come. As a band, you're providing a service by playing the show. You shouldn't be responsible for providing the money too.

MRR: Another prominent song of yours is "Nature of the Game." What's that one about?

We wrote that song after one particularly disturbing experience we had at a show. We were playing out of state where we didn't really know anyone and this drunk older guy came up to us and wouldn't leave us alone. He was saying inappropriate things to us and made us feel really uncomfortable and even a little bit scared. We ended up having to avoid him for half of the show and it ruined our night. Sad to say, we actually had to hide in the girls' bathroom. That wasn't the first time a creepy old bastard hassled us at one of our shows and it won't be the last. "Nature of the Game" is about how being in a girl band is a totally different game than being in a guy band and the challenges that come with it.

MRR: What is it like being an all girl band in a male dominated scene?

Not bad. A lot of times after we play our set, we hear the same thing from people: "When I saw you guys get up on stage I

thought 'Great, another girl band.' But after I heard you play, I gotta say I enjoyed it. You girls are angry!" (or some variation of that). So we might have more to prove than most guy bands do, but the people that give us a chance see that we have just as much to say as any other band. The down side, other than what we said about "Nature of the Game," is that sometimes people get the wrong idea about us because we are all girls. We aren't a Riot Grrrl band. We aren't even a feminist band. We're just a plain old punk band. People should listen to our music before trying to book us on all-girl shows (not that we have a problem with other girl bands, but...) nine times out of ten we sound nothing like the other bands and we usually end up clearing the place out. Not our fault. Do your research! One guy once said to us laughingly, "You ladies have deeper voices than I do!" Thank you whiskey!

MRR: Out of everywhere you have played so far, where is the best punk scene in your opinion?
Connecticut. Maybe we're biased because this is our home, but in our opinion it doesn't get better than this. Usually a lot of people come out to shows even when there's no big headliner playing. The people here have seen us at our best and worst times and supported us all along. In Connecticut we have some amazing local bands, venues, and friends. It's a great community to be a part of. We couldn't ask for anything better.

MRR: What is one of your favorite Broad moments?
We would have to say our proudest moment was a show at the El'n'Gee in New London, Connecticut. We were headlining the show and it was running pretty late. We were in our final song "CTCP," which is one of our fan favorites about the Connecticut punk scene, and we must have gone over our allotted set time, because the staff at the Gee started unplugging us. First to go were the vocals, but that didn't matter because the crowd still sang along. Then the guitar was silenced. Crazines threw her guitar down and started shouting along with the crowd. Next to be unplugged was the bass. All that was left were the drums and the synchronized chants of our fans and friends until the song ended. It was pretty epic.

MRR: What is the worst moment you've had as a band?
We've had two pretty disastrous nights. It's hard to pick one over the other, so you get to hear both. The first one was one of TayToxic and Michelle Threat's birthday shows. We were playing with a lot of great bands at a warehouse and TayToxic was partying it up celebrating her birthday. She might have had a little... okay, a lot, too much to drink, and (luckily after our set was over), somehow managed to fall hand-first into the bathroom mirror. It shattered, and part of it got lodged in her hand. There was broken glass and blood all over everything. It looked like a crime scene in there. Michelle, Riley and Crazines searched frantically for something to use as a bandage, and although TayToxic and Michelle both had relatively clean bandannas on them, no one realized that until it was way too late. Riley and Crazines found a gross, dirty, probably AIDS infested blanket lying around in the warehouse and decided to use that. Crazines drove TayToxic and the disgusting blanket to the hospital, leaving Riley and Michelle to clean up the mess. Taylor refused to go in, so Crazines drove her home and decided to disinfect the wound with alcohol. That night, her catchphrase "Just pour some Jack on it!" was born. So, at least something good did come out of that night.

Then, there was the night Crazines got arrested. Basically she was just in the wrong place at the wrong time, carving our band's name into a fence outside of the El'n'Gee with a knife, when a cop walked by. Within a few minutes, there were six cops surrounding us, guns drawn and making a huge scene. They called it "destruction of property" even though they never even attempted to find the person who owned the fence. He wouldn't have cared. The band and a few of our friends spent the night and most of the next morning sitting on the floor of the New London Police Department, eating a pizza we had delivered there and drawing on the box "Free Crazines!" The idea for our song "Above the Law" came from that experience. So again, that night wasn't a total loss.

MRR: What are your future plans?
Within the next few months, we're going to California to see what the West Coast is like. We also plan to finish recording our next CD, which will be our first CD as a three piece, *Guilty As Charged*. There will be a tour to follow down the East Coast, as soon as we have the funds for it. And we may also be doing a Canada visit next year if everything goes to plan. Other than that, we will continue doing what we've been doing all along. Writing, playing shows and recording, and doing it all for ourselves. It seems to be working out pretty well for us so far. We thank you for having us, cheers!

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LOS CULITOS

Los Culitos is a four-piece from Helsinki, Finland (Europe for you non-Europeans, that is)! Fronted by vocalist Yvonne and guitarist/songwriter Miguelito, the band's been blasting out their simplistic brand of garage punk for a few years now and has three self-financed 7„ EPs under their belt.

They sing in Spanish and overall would appear as if they came straight outta the fringes of the Basque country...but, alas, cold and depressive Finland it is! So there must be some horrendous cultural-climatic mistake in play here, at least judging by the title of their new 7„ Estoy Aqui por Error (I'm Here by Mistake). I had a few good shots of Spanish Veterano brandy with Yvonne and Miguelito and set out to find out just what the hell it's all about! Here goes... Interview by T. Bone Jarvis. Photos by Vuoto Brothers. Poster artwork by Keke.

Los Culitos is:
Yvonne Hauser: vocals/kazoo/tambourine
Miguelito: guitar/harmonica/backing vocals
Keke: bass/backing vocals
Santi: drums

MRR: Tell me what's it like to be in a DIY garage punk band in Finland in 2014.
Miguelito: I like to do things by myself, because then there's no one else to blame for your mistakes and if you succeed you get all the credit. Seriously, there is no alternative if you want to get your underground music out. And, of course, it's fun. I love making art.

MRR: To make matters a bit more complicated, you decided to sing in Spanish rather than your native Finnish or the traditional lingua franca of rock, English. What's up with that?
Yvonne: Yeah, we get that a lot: "Why is a Finnish band singing in Spanish?„ In 2008 Miguelito and our former drummer Johnny Stomp needed a singer in their new band and the guys were like, "Yvonne, you are going to be a singer in this band!„ I was forced to be a singer: I had no experience in singing at all except singing in a choir like back in the early 1980s. So for me it was a completely new thing to sing in the band. First few rehearsals I did try to sing in English but it really didn't sound or feel good. I had just lived in Spain for seven months and after the first rehearsals in Spanish, I knew it was my language to sing, as weird as it sounds!
Miguelito: And Spanish sounds sexier!
MRR: Is this quasi-Spaniard thing merely an escapist figment of your imagination or do you really feel the Iberian continent is your second home?
Yvonne: I still think that the city of Coruna where I lived for a while is the most beautiful place on earth. I did a song about it on our first EP, A Coruna, which is and will be the only slow dance we'll ever do. I'm still very much interested in what happens in Spain and am actually doing my Ph.D. wwork on the graffiti concerning the Spanish economical crisis. So the answer to your question is a definite yes, considering that Spain is in my mind every single day.
Miguelito: My home is where my hat lies. But I'd rather spend my days under the warm Spanish sun.

MRR: So are you really from Finland at all? To me it seems you inhabit some anti-society or cultural no-man's land, huh?
Miguelito: Sometimes it certainly feels like that. Finnish summer is nice but spending the wintertime somewhere else would be ideal. And of course the northern isolation seems to exist in our heads, too.

MRR: Both of you must be fluent in Spanish then? I know Miguelito got his basics down by prepping hard with Los Serrano (a Spanish TV series), right?
Yvonne: I have actually studied Spanish for two years but if you listen to my lyrics carefully, it's pretty obvious that a semi-amateur has written them. Miguelito is a real grammar wanker and likes to correct my spelling mistakes and all.
Miguelito: My Spanish is far from fluent. I may be a bit of a grammar geek but in an actual social interaction I suck.

MRR: Okay, now that we've gotten the most baffling lingual/cultural aspects sorted out, let's talk some music, shall we? What kind of music did you set out to do when you first started out?
Yvonne: The goal was to make garage punk with a really positive vibe. And also to introduce the Spanish language into the Finnish music scene.
Miguelito: Positivity and easygoing music that feels comfortable to play.

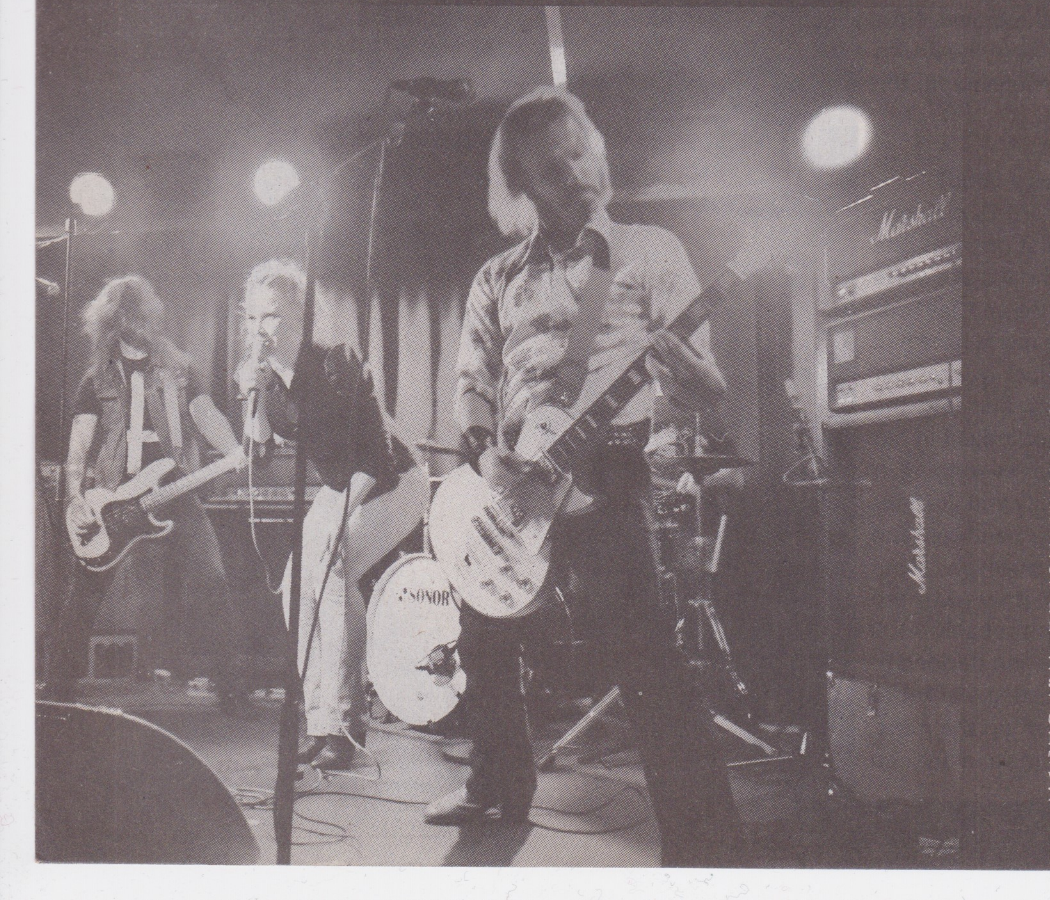
MRR: Your musical tastes are quite varied judging from some of your covers. Roky Erickson is pretty obvious, but G.G. Allin? And even Venom?!
Yvonne: The more you listen to music, the more bands and artists you find, even outside your own music genres. Our newest cover is Joan Jett's "Bad Reputation.„ Actually, I just realized that all our covers are from the 1980s, which isn't my favorite music decade at all.
Miguelito: Cover songs are supposed to be an extension of your own music. There is no song you could not adapt into your repertoire if you are willing to make some effort. But it's logical to cover those songs you like.

MRR: Dead Moon is certainly a name that comes to mind when considering your DIY ethos and also Yvonne's vocals to some degree.
Yvonne: We are both huge fans. We did mail our EP to Toody and Fred and hoped to be their warm-up band on their next tour in Finland.

MRR: Since you two have been on a shared (personal) adventure for quite some time now, was it a natural progression to have a shared band, too?
Yvonne: Oh, no, no. I have always been a music listener and gig-goer and never imagined myself on the stage performing. At our first gig I was so nervous I puked and fainted just before the gig. I guess I would have never made it if our bass player, Keke, hadn't grabbed my shoulders and said, looking straight into my weyes, "Yvonne, being on the stage and performing is the best thing you can do in life. It's even better than sex.„
Miguelito: It was all really coincidental. Luckily I've been blessed with the best. And with Los Culitos I wouldn't change a thing.

MRR: But you still have separate record collections, right? □laughter□
Yvonne: There's no other way. And hey, since we mostly listen to Miguelito's collection, most of my records are still in "sealed condition.„

MRR: Is Yvonne gonna learn to play the bass at some point, maybe?
Yvonne: Definitely not! Keke is perfect for Los Culitos.
Miguelito: And I should learn to play drums. Then we could get vinyl-pressing machinery. So we could manufacture everything by ourselves. It would be a total DIY utopia/curse.



MRR: You seem to have finally found a working rhythm section and a stable lineup. How active are you playing gigs and promoting your stuff?
Yvonne: We have been sending around our latest EP (Estoy Aquí por Error) to small record labels during the last few months. Hoping to find somebody to release our forthcoming LP (twenty or so songs), which we will be recording this summer. We have done some gigs in Helsinki and would very much like to play in Spain to see how the Spaniards like our music. We were asked to play a gig in a strip joint in Spain because of our band name (translated "little asses"). [laughter]

MRR: It must be very exciting being a part of the vibrant Scandinavian rock'n'roll scene, with all the great bands and venues and all the tradition for rockin' it out, huh?!
Miguelito: Yeah, really fuckin' exciting.

MRR: Seriously, Finland is not really Scandinavia, is it? It's a common misconception, but Finland is basically "Fenno-Scandia," sandwiched between the East and West, Heaven and Hell, if you wish. And it tends to come out somehow in the local sound, too. You don't feel you're really part of this Finnish melancholia thing, do you?
Miguelito: No. We are really trying to fight this depression. But somehow it's so strong and firmly anchored to our culture that changing it requires all our effort.

MRR: Are there any other Finnish bands—past or present—worth mentioning at all?
Yvonne: I am a huge fan of Jolly Jumpers.
Miguelito: I'm more into old stuff like Faff-Bey, Death Trip, Terveet Kädet, Rattus, and Radiopuhelimet. Haistelijat is a new band that kicks ass.

MRR: How about Miguelito's (or rather his alter ego Mike Henry Leaks) other ventures, the Bluestation and Napoleons?
Miguelito: Blah...I think the Bluestation is not relevant anymore. Hopefully Napoleons will record their first and final full-length album this year.

MRR: Miguelito seems to have a lot goin' on musically. Is it like you have a need to stretch your songwriting into different arenas depending on what you happen to be listening to at a given time, or what?
Miguelito: Maybe I'm stretching even too much. Now it feels like I'm going to hold my horses and concentrate on Los Culitos.

MRR: Maybe you just need a new band for every new guitar or amp that you get, ha ha!
Miguelito: Yeah, but lately I've been selling my equipment. There's no use keeping your guitars in the closet.

MRR: Are you gonna use more of the harmonica in Los Culitos, 'cause that friggin' rules! And hardly anybody is actually using that instrument these days outside of the blues, really.
Yvonne: I'm hoping we'll get some banjo added to our new songs. That's rare in garage punk!
Miguelito: The bad thing is that I cannot play guitar and harmonica at the same time. Harmonica is a spice we are gonna use in the future as well. Banjo is a good idea!

MRR: The kazoo gives a nice touch too, Yvonne.
Miguelito: And some distorted garage-rock/psychedelic-organ would rule.

MRR: A serious one: how do you muster the drive and motivation to do what you do?
Yvonne: Fun. Fun. Fun. As long as we all have fun playing, it keeps us going.
Miguelito: I'm the one with the motivation problem sometimes. But if the cross-country skiing is another choice, it's no choice at all. I've been playing guitar since the late '80s, my thumbnail is a friggin' plectrum.

MRR: Will you still carry on with the DIY thing or do you dream that managers, record executives, and talent scouts reach out for you?
Yvonne: We are more into DIY, like doing our own record covers, photo shoots, videos, and band stickers. We have recorded our music in pretty exotic places like a sauna, in an old youth club, and in living rooms, so a real studio would be an experience. Although it would be nice to have someone to release our LP, too.

MRR: Should you break through in South America, you could really make a career out of it and quit your day jobs!
Yvonne: Immediately. Work is never as fun or rewarding.

MRR: At the present, where and how can people buy your records?
Yvonne: Order from facebook.com/losculitospunk or some European record stores on the web. For example, Blondes Must Die (Spain) and Don't Buy Records (Netherlands).

MRR: Do you have it available on the dreaded interweb?
Yvonne: No, some songs are available for listening at soundcloud.com/losculitos.

MRR: Do you think that the music industry is fucked because of the Internet?
Yvonne: In Finland, I see it more as a fault of the big record companies that are acting in the name of making money, not necessary for releasing interesting music.
Miguelito: We are going through the state of crisis in the music business. So, we are kinda fortunate to be able to do our music by our own conditions. The underground movement survives, no matter what.

MRR: Is the scene dead?
Yvonne: No, thanks to the small record labels and fanzines.

MRR: You're not pessimists, are you? PMA is the new FTW, no?
Miguelito: I truly hope so. What's so funny about peace, love, and understanding?

MRR: Vinyl at least seems to have made a heavy comeback. Ten-year-olds are getting into record collecting now.
Miguelito: And the prices are rising. I'm constantly trying to find new stuff before it gets over-priced.

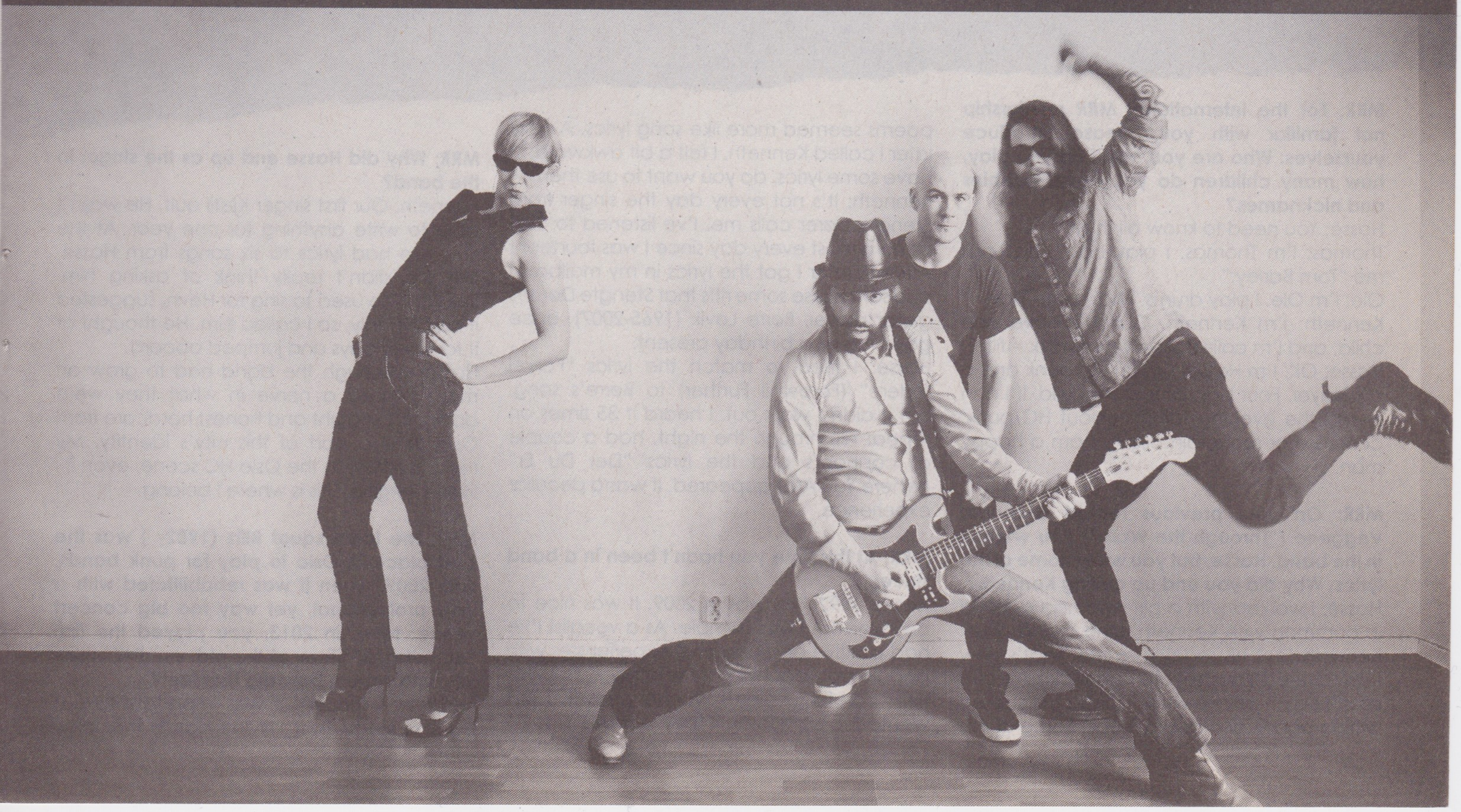
MRR: It's obvious that vinyl is your format of choice anyway. It just wouldn't be the same with CD-Rs and mp3s, would it?
Yvonne: For me, music exists only in the analogical form. I hardly ever listen to anything other than vinyl. And C-cassettes in my car!
Miguelito: I like to touch. Vinyl is forever. It will be here long after the band has ceased to exist.

MRR: Okay, no one knows what the future may hold, 'cause the crystal ball is in the pawnshop and all. But what is your Five-Year Master Plan for Los Culitos? Are you gonna keep on keeping on?
Yvonne: First LP in 2015, tour in Spain in 2016, second LP in 2017, tour in South America 2018 and of course the Greatest Hits LP in 2019.

MRR: Lastly, please name three of the best, most influential, and underrated living songwriters and performers of our time. You know that I know which three you're gonna pick. So let's give some credit where credit's due!
Yvonne: My top three places go to: Coprolitos (Spain), Isa Y Los Antihéroes (Spain), and Kill Devil Hills (Australia).
Miguelito: Sonny Vincent, Fred Cole, Spencer P. Jones... and Tim Hemensley lives forever.

MRR: And then it's down to the famous last words and the ol' anything-to-add section.
Miguelito and Yvonne: ...when all is said and done the pungent stench remains. Thank you, Kiitos, and Gracias para todos!

Contact Los Culitos at facebook.com/losculitospunk



Knuste Ruter is an institution in the Norwegian hardcore/punk scene. Without the slightest hint of retro in their sound, they carry on the torch of classic bands like Kafka Prosess, Svart Framtid, So Much Hate and Stengte Dører (the latter's vocalist even joined the band). I joined them one fine evening at their own studio, Endless Tinnitus, an old, run down shed where more Oslo punk releases than you can count have been recorded. Lo Spirito Continua!

Interview by Erik Anarchy. Photos by Thomas Lyd, Erik Moholdt, Josefin Winther, Torstein Eriksen.

KNUSTE RUTER

MRR: For the international *MRR* readership not familiar with you, please introduce yourselves: Who are you, what do you play, how many children do you have, hobbies and nicknames?

Hasse: You need to know all that?

Thomas: I'm Thomas. I play bass. They call me "Tom Barley."

Ole: I'm Ole. I play drums. I have one kid.

Kenneth: I'm Kenneth. Guitar. I have one child, and I'm called Mr. Møkk. [Møkk = filth]

Hasse: OK, I'm Hasse, I'm an old punk and a bricklayer. Four kids, one grandchild. If I can spend the evening talking about HC/punk, concrete or mountain biking, I am a happy man.

MRR: On your previous record *Gjennom Veggene* ("Through the Walls") you weren't in the band, Hasse, but you wrote some of the lyrics. Why did you end up calling Kenneth?

Hasse: I worked with a girl who had a friend in common with Kenneth. One day at work Kenneth sent his regards to me. That's how I discovered Knuste Ruter. I checked it out, and liked it—after a while... I had just started writing again for a poetry book. Some of the poems seemed more like song lyrics. A year later I called Kenneth. I felt a bit awkward: "I have some lyrics, do you want to use them?"

Kenneth: It's not every day the singer from Stengte Dører calls me. I've listened to that band almost every day since I was fourteen! A week later I got the lyrics in my mailbox. I also sent Hasse some riffs that Stengte Dører's guitar player, Børre Løvik (1965-2007), once gave me as a birthday present.

Hasse: I tried to match the lyrics "Farvel Videre" (Farewell Further) to Børre's song, but it didn´t work out. I heard it 35 times on repeat all through the night, had a couple of cognac´s and the lyrics "Der Du Er" (Where You Are) appeared. It was a peculiar experience.

MRR: At this time you hadn't been in a band since...?

Hasse: 1992! This was in 2009. It was nice to be involved. I was humble. As a vocalist I've had positive and negative experiences with people approaching me with lyrics. So I was very careful—I didn't wanna push it, I just wanted to contribute if they wanted it.

MRR: Why did Hasse end up as the singer in the band?

Kenneth: Our first singer Kjetil quit. He wasn't able to write anything for one year. At the time we had lyrics to six songs from Hasse, but we didn't really think of asking him. Sonya, who used to sing for Hevn, suggested it half-jokingly, so I called him. He thought of it for three days and jumped aboard.

Hasse: Although the band had to grow on me, I sensed a nerve in what they were doing. It's straight and honest hardcore from Oslo, and a part of this city's identity. My roots are here in the Oslo HC scene, even if I live in Bergen. This is where I belong.

MRR: The local squat Blitz (1982-) was the best place in Oslo to play for punk bands, until 2009, when it was rehabilitated with a very professional, yet way too big concert venue. Now, in 2013, you played the first "comeback" show at the old, smaller, more intimate venue. How did that feel?

Kenneth: I thought it was important to get back a stage that fits the bands that play

there, and to continue what Blitz has always been. I am very inspired by the Negazione record *Lo Spirito Continua*. That's what it is about: to continue a spirit, not to imitate the past, but to start afresh, yet continue. It was important for us to take part in making that happen. That is our attitude: Just do what we wanna do.
Ole: For many, punk is just a style, with no content. For us it's the DIY ideal.
Hasse: That's what's important, not how you look or how you sound: Get up and go, get things done, don't just wait around for things to happen. Squat, create art in the streets, make stunts, graphical workshops, whatever.

MRR: How do you see the punk scene in Oslo today?
Kenneth: The punk scene in Oslo now is small, but the people who are left, are dedicated. A few years ago, it reached an all time low. The political, cultural and social consciousness was totally absent, and I couldn't relate to the scene what so ever. I loved punk rock, but hated punks—and that's too bad... My ideal is that it's possible to go to a punk show and get drunk on Friday without missing the demonstration on Saturday. In the '90s you had 500 people at a Blitz show, but only because punk was hip. One of our songs "Det Var En Gang" (Once Upon a Time) is about the rejection of mainstream society, about punk being something else. I've always felt as an outsider. And I've bonded with other outsiders. Then punk was taken over by the jocks and the coolest kids in school, and I felt outside even there. Now it's quite different. All the hipsters moved on to different things. A few good people that wanna do something good in the HC/punk scene, have found each other. Punks and skins and straightedge kids hang out together, and we accept each other's differences.

MRR: In what way is the political consciousness manifested in the scene today, as opposed to a few years ago?
Thomas: Lots of good bands.
Kenneth: Animal rights. Although that's sort of a scene in itself, it has strong ties to the punk scene... And housing activism of course.

MRR: Speaking of that, what is the situation with Endless Studios?
Kenneth: It's not about housing, but it's a part of the same gentrification process that's going on in Gamlebyen (The Old Town of Oslo). This process started at least ten years ago in the rest of Europe, and now it's happening here too. It's the same old story: Gamlebyen is a central area, classic working class, then hippies, artists and punks started moving in. Nearby you have the central station and the opera, and what once was considered a slum, is now gaining market value. Free zones like Brakkebygrenda (urban ecological housing project) and our studio are threatened. We rent the place from the local authorities, and have the right to do so endlessly. They want to terminate that.

MRR: They tried to sell it, and arranged a showcase for potential buyers?
Kenneth: Yeah, and we arranged a demonstration, with a concert, some banners and a bonfire. The authorities threatened to throw us out if we did stuff like this again. What happened to freedom of speech? The whole thing is a farce. The last eight years we haven't even had a toilet. So we've been pissing all over Gamlebyen all this time, ha ha! We'll keep fighting to keep our rental contract with no time limit.

MRR: What changes do you wish to see in the punk scene today?
Kenneth: Hasse wrote some lyrics called "Til grunnen" (to the ground), which is about getting to the bottom of things, always questioning, which is what punk is for me. About focusing on what you really want.

MRR: What do you really want?
Kenneth: In a way I guess I'd like to bring back the spirit of the '80s... [laughter] There was something there, that I've been told about from people like Hasse, a spirit that got lost on the way.

MRR: Hasse, you were there, what is lost?
Hasse: That was then—this is now. It's a different time, and I am in a different place than I was back then. Our main goal—in a longer perspective—must be that human beings are nice to each other, and that we get a good world to live in. That's not done in a day. You don't have to take on the entire world at once, you can start with your neighbour and the people around you. Then it can grow gradually. I start with my own daily life, and hope for some effects. Instead of chopping the head of the beast only to see another head grow out, I believe in small change. For me it's a new angle. I've never given up; it's just nearer now, and less utopian. That's something I can believe in, and something I must believe in.

MRR: Norway is a rich country where consequences of the financial crisis are not felt as hard as they are across most of Europe. In what way is that reflected in the punk scene? Are Norwegian punks more rich, lazy and apathetic?
Hasse: When you are under pressure, it's easier to fight. In the '80s we were chased around all the time, you had to fight. Apathy is the great enemy.
Kenneth: All punks are lazy. Of course! In a way. Then again, we are more active than most people... I don't know anyone in my surroundings that has been directly affected by the financial crisis, but I have heard about people on the west side of town that have committed suicide because of it. I think punks generally are less affected, because we live outside the financial circle. Of course it's harder to get a job, but most punks don't want to work anyway. Yet, I think it's quiet before the storm here in Norway. We've had eigt years with an apathetic red/green (labour/socialist/centre) government, but the conservatives joining forces with the right wing populist party recently replaced this. Youth centres will be shut down, and all that will matter is how much money you have.

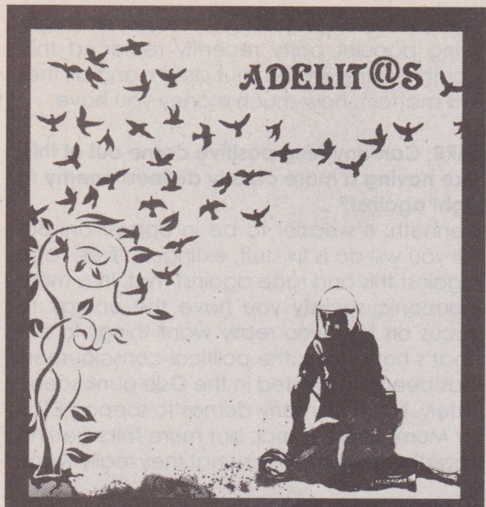
MRR: Can anything positive come out of this, like having a more clearly defined enemy to fight against?
Kenneth: It's easier to be in opposition. But all you will do is fix stuff, extinguish fires, rage against this and rage against that. In a more harmonic society you have the energy to focus on how you really want things to be. That's how I think the political consciousness has been manifested in the Oslo punk scene lately. Not that many demos to support EZLN or Mumia Abu Jamal, but more folks getting together and creating what they really want.

MRR: What other bands/projects do you feel related to?
Ole: There are a bunch of good bands: Modern Love... [Laughter]
Erik: You don't have to say that (it's my band).
Ole: That's no secret! And Ødeleggers, Jenkem Warriors, the Blitz bands...
Hasse: Danger!Man is the band I consider to be my closest family. Also Bloodsuckers, Anti Social Rejects, Modern Love, Dishonorable Discharge, the Blitz bands... All the stuff happening around here at Endless Tinnitus Studios.
Kenneth: It's a cheap studio, so many bands record their 7" or demo here, and some of us practice here.

MRR: And you also put up gigs in the studio?
Kenneth: Yeah. The local straightedge scene has been very involved in that. I am far from SxE myself, but I embrace the positivity and the spirit. Maybe it's because I am not really a part of it, that I have a bit of an outsider's view, that I like it so much, ha ha! Plus they organize things well, clean up, stick to their word, show up on time and stay sober. No puking, fights, cops or drama or any of that stuff I got bored with since I'm not a teenager anymore.

MRR: Barcelona punks Absurdo even put out a live 7" from Endless?
Kenneth: Yeah, it came with a zine. I haven't heard it yet. We record every band that plays here. One day we'll make a compilation, or perhaps a live series, like "Your Choice." I have the title ready: *Flex Your Shed*. I think it's important to document what's happening, so that it can inspire people to create something. When kids see *Karate Kid* they go out and try doing a flying kick. When they see a good skateboard movie, they grab their boards and shred 'til they bleed. It makes you fired up, and it's the same with punk rock. That's why I do this, and that's why I still sit here in this old shed.

Knuste Ruter's LP Bruddstykker *is out on Ruin Nation, Skuld & Sjakk Matt.*



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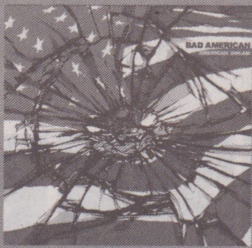

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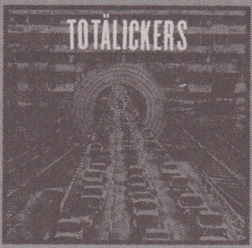

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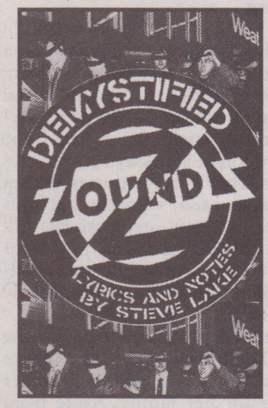

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"All the world cannot be wrong, it must be me I don't belong"
A lyric from that resonates with many and still affirms the experiences of punks today. Zounds has always been hard to place, not so much punk in sound, however, in lyrics and spirit they embodied true tenets of the anarcho-punk genre: alienation, refusal, restlessness and hope. Their music was much more complex and transcended the constrictions of genre; dark undertones mixed with upbeat tempos invoking feelings of franticness and fear.

This book is written by Steve Lake, the singer/guitarist and only original member. It's told in a really interesting style lyrics are presented in a timeline as songs are written and released followed by a story. The song lyrics act a placemarker for that time and the stories range from childhood memories to crazy drug freakouts.

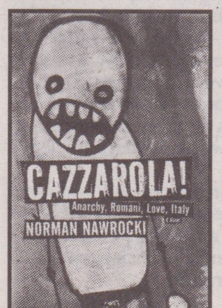
Zounds got their start like most first wave anarcho/peace punk bands at the time, by playing the free festival circuit. Once a hippy haven, but after Crass brought a bunch of bands and punks to perform and hang out—in which a riot erupted—they soon stopped and decided to take their free festival on the road. Accompanied by the Mob, Survivors of Mu and the Astronauts all four bands crammed into a bus and set out to play a bunch of free shows. Steve jumped into the bus with nothing more than coveralls, spending his dole check the night before, and set out on the road. They made due with taking donations, but things quickly turned sour after cigarettes were found in the nights dinner and Mark Mob was severely electrocuted by the PA.

Things seem to turn up for Zounds as they are asked to record a Crass single. Steve goes into detail the process which I found extremely interesting since all the information we really get about that label is from Penny Rimbaud sitting in his dusty old farmhouse waxing poetic about days long gone. Apparently Crass was very particular in what they put out—hiring a session drummer for Zounds' recording session and designing the packaging without the input of Zounds. The Crass singles were no more than propaganda for the movement.

It goes onto their later material with Rough Trade and some scary stories of touring Eastern Europe. Steve's writing is not a tell-all but its honest because these are his lyrics about his lived experience.

Overall this book offers a glimpse into early '80s squatter culture the good and the bad. For being so short it covers Zounds entire career, but doesn't cut any details out. Perfect for the anarchopunk completist.

—Ari Perezdiez



Cazzarola! Anarchy, Romani, Love, Italy
Norman Nawrocki
318 pages • $18.00
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

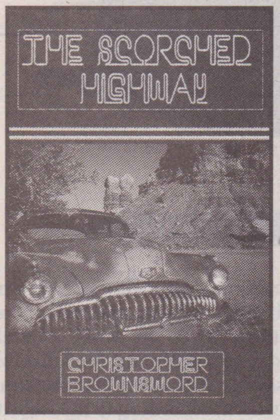
When I see the words "gripping," "family" and "epic" next to one another on a book jacket, I get nervous. Often, I find that multigenerational family histories fail to provide a connection with any one character, and without that connection, it is hard to find a reason to care about the story being told. *Cazzarola! Anarchy, Romani, Love, Italy* somehow overcomes this problem. A screenplay structure early in the book, jumping between present-day scenes and historical events related to the anarchist Discordia family, gradually gives way to focus on the present day in the latter part of the book. I barely noticed this transition, and in the modern day story, I found recognizable characters, believable situations and dare I say it, a kick ass gritty love story absent of empty clichés. The way this novel (which, according to the website has toured as a performance) brings awareness to the plight of present-day Romani living in Italy by juxtaposing current Italian nationalism and fascism with Nazism and fascism in the past century is thought provoking, well-researched, and lends a sense of urgency to the political issues at hand.

In the beginning of the book, short sections written from different characters' points of view introduce generations of Discordias and their friends. From the past, we have grandfathers and grandmothers, uncles, mothers, and even an assassin. The historical slivers related to the Discordias are interwoven with short news briefs drawn from the present and past centuries illustrating wave after wave of Italian nationalism and fascism. I will refrain from summarizing the plot, but I will say that Nawrocki does a really nice job of bringing attention to the current political situation in Italy through historical comparisons, showing that the perils of nationalism are transcendent across borders and throughout generations. There are the misguided hopes of the masses: "Mussolini reminded us of our former greatness and gave us hope again! He offered new aspirations to conquer the world ..." (128); there are the tendencies for groups to emphasize characteristics that define their belonging, and in doing so, creating the always poisonous "us" and "them"; there are the personal allegiances which draw otherwise intelligent people down idiotic political paths. Highlighting these various plagues of the human condition (or even more specifically, the plagues of group behavior) Nawrocki shows how the specter of fascism hangs heavy over Rome.

In the present day, we have Antonio Discordia, born in 1979, finishing his philosophy degree in Rome, recording an album with his band, chronically late to his job in a restaurant. Anything sound familiar? He falls in love with an elusive Romani violinist, Cinka, after seeing her busking in the city and their love story is the central element of the novel. As the rings of the story widen, we meet the members of Antonio's band (his cousin, Rafaele: "Loves reggae. Makes good tomato sauce" and Massimaxo, a friend). I really like these people for many reasons, not the least of which, they cook and eat amazing food, then discuss political issues late into the night, work hard making good music, get hangovers sometimes and their jobs are secondary to the real things that give their life meaning. I'd like to have pasta and beer with them.

Besides the history and politics, there is a lot to respect about this book thematically. I enjoyed the Italian imagery (for instance, the moon described as a sliver of Limoncello). The music, food, flowers, birds, cities and countryside are vibrant and real and served as a constructive showcase for Italian pride (contrasted against the fascists' destructive nationalism). The activists' meeting scenes entail the chaos of everyone speaking at once, bursting with political passion and ideas. The romance somehow captures the earnestness and insanity of falling in love, while at the same time delivering political awareness, by comparing Antonio's life as an Italian with Cinka's hardships as a Romani immigrant. The Discordias' continued resistance to fascism gives the struggle a sense of hope, reminding us of the importance of historical memory and that positive political ideas can be passed down through generations. Familiar bands and music in general are both ever-present in the book: "He passes the pizza place, the falafel houses ... and turns into the coolness of the music store. Here he feels at home, alive, totally stimulated, head to toe" (101). To me, it is the everyday, relatable situations like this that make the book fun to read. If there is any criticism to offer, it is that I identified less with the main female character than with the males—her plotline runs a bit predictable. All in all, this is an honest novel that reveals Italian history through an interesting story. Populated with strong history and characters, I recommend it as the anarchist summer beach read (and, I mean that as a compliment.)

—Alyson Barrett-Ryan



The Scorched Highway
Christopher Brownsword
132 pgs • £5.99
Oneiros Books
www.paraphiliamagazine.com/oneirosbooks

How do you regard a joke that doesn't elicit a laugh? That is the condition I found in reading this searing travel log of depravity and malice.

Vivid accounts of angry violent people, sex with unattractive people, desperate people self-medicating with crack, weed and alcohol...bowel movements and details of treating hemorrhoids. If that sounds like your thing then look no further. And if you find yourself like I was—a captive audience, then at least I can assure you it will be a short ride.

This fictional story opens with the narrator arriving in NYC circa fall of 2004. Though the town has been largely cleansed of overt sleaze the property values decreases with every scene that he walks into. He is a twenty-something from England on the run from a violent and heartbreaking lovers spat. This drives him to America and a dozen cities largely only getting a day in each place. He flails into every scenario often getting high and getting off to mark his time in each location. The narrator frequently revisits the events of the heartbreak and this crisis acts as a sort of glue to his degenerate exploits in each town. His road trip rolls through the South, the South West, California and then culminates in the blistering cold of the Rockies in November. The finale is set during a storm amplifying already a state of friendlessness—but that condition appears to be carried into each town along the way. Hardly any character arch can be deciphered when turning to the last page though the book's own press offers an eventual "vulnerability" to be found. If the narrator expressed tenderness I was too overwhelmed to catch it. What I found is a journey to taste hell: malevolent, transgressive and lurid.

A parade of loathsome people enters into the narrator's sphere only to quickly dispatch before any real connection is made. This creates a sort of impressionistic effect to the book as a whole. The main story also has vignettes with technical descriptions of insects and nature peppered throughout it. The one-two punch of bad boy antics with scientific thought aids to the air of hallucination. It also hints that the writer is coming at us with a pedigree. The book's inscription references Milton and Shakespeare furthers this suspicion. Despite hot flashes of dictionary words the lion's share of the narrative is pretty much preoccupied in appeasing a conversation with moronic culture. Thieves, scammers, prostitutes and thugs abound. Maybe it is meant to show us (and speak to) the real side of America—the one suppressed in polite society. Perhaps the intended revelation from this book is that disintegration was common across the land as the "War on Terror" is at full powers just after 911.

But these people who are preoccupied in misbehaving were abundant before that farce. The writing style that mingles shock with abstract thought seems to me to be a technique to appease to both lowbrow and highbrow paying customers.

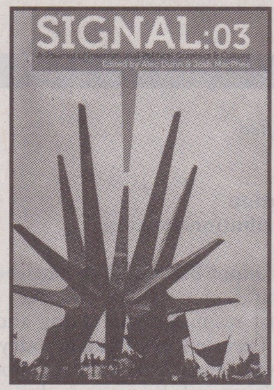
I suspect Chris Brownsword—without ever reading him or about him—is a Wordsmith. The way the story is executed exudes a confidence. I hadn't encountered any clumsy sentences with typos or misused words. The story moves with an economy and a precision often missing in works handed to me to review. The one inconsistency is that the narrator doesn't seem English—but does come across as an authentically unlikable person. This was one of the most impressive feats. As a character study it strikes a nerve.

There are times that I felt I read this story a few times before and then I was reminded of the various travel zines that have passed my desk. I'd almost forgive the narrator if this were a shitty zine. With such an overwhelming sense of dread consistently seeping through the pages you got to wonder about the will to work on such a document. And considering that this is a mass-produced book, with a team of people getting it to us, I assume then a shared conspiracy to promote hate. A zine is too often one person writing it, producing it and distributing it. In that regard I find more things done in a zine forgivable. When a record of dystopia like this shit is handed to me I ultimately find it to have properties with no real alternative than the ones on sale in the mainstream.

In the Scorched Highway's case the universal hate can be overwhelming—and viewed as bigoted. There isn't a passage that doesn't seep, reference or crescendo into racism, homophobia and most of all sexism. I believe the book can be defended to represent a true America I suppose. But while reading it, it occurred to me how little this work has anything to do with punk, or at least the punk that I am interested in or most readers of *MRR*. If a sound track played during these pages it would be the textures of commercial dance music, classic rock, salsa and dirty hip hop. If anything sounding like punk played it would be to a backdrop to a disturbing moment. Well the main character travels on a forged bus pass—that is probably the main relation to a vibrant DIY culture. The rest of the prose will mostly interest the criminal minded who have been hoodwinked into doing the dirty work of capitalists.

It is evident that much of the book isn't intended to be humorous. Maybe the underlying emotion is tragedy but I missed it maneuvering through the mental illness occupying the center stage of the plot. *Scorched Highway's* ability to fascinate or shock is undeniable and it has its own acquired taste. I am reminded of some of the other writers lauded by punks that endeavor to take the reader into psychological car wrecks: Rollins, Bukowski, Burroughs…if that's your thing I think you found your man.

—Robert Eggplant



Signal: 03
A Journal of International Political Graphics and Culture
Edited by Alec Dunn and Josh MacPhee
158 pages • $14.94
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

The third volume of *Signal* has a little bit of everything to entertain and inform: whether you are a hardened art and social justice critic, or an uninformed-yet-generally-interested comrade, such as myself. The journal is a collection of six essays, interviews and dissertations. They span centuries, causes and locations and each vignette explores various art forms and expressions, all working toward furthering social justice or commenting on an oppressive cultural/social/political regime. Overall, this is an extremely well cultivated and immensely interesting publication and I really enjoyed reading it.

One of my favorite parts of *Signal* was an interview conducted with the cofounder of Paredon Records, Barbara Dane. The interviewers, Erin Yanke and Alec Dunn, conducted a telephone interview with Dane while the singer was helping to prepare a Christmas Eve dinner for her family. Aside from creating Paredon Records, Dane has had an amazing decades-long career as a professional singer. She achieved a level of fame after winning a contest to host her own TV show, and was slated to tour Europe with Louis Armstrong before being suddenly blacklisted during the Red Scare. Through her contacts that she made while touring the world singing alongside revolutionaries, Dane was able to parcel together different unique and socially conscious recordings. Some of the first records released on Paredon were a collection of Latin American protest songs, songs of the GI resistance (sung by Dane along with active duty GI's), Angolan liberation songs and a spoken word album featuring a prison interview with Huey Newton. Dane found a way to not only procure rare recordings, but, along with her co-founder Irwin Silbert, put out these pressings in an extremely frugal and sustainable way.

While the content of Paredon Records' discography is very impressive and diverse, the cover art is beautiful in its simplicity. Working with several collaborators, Paredon takes local art, photographs taken from the *Guardian*'s photo vault and simplistic typography to create moving and lasting images. The prints of the record covers contained in *Signal* would be enough to legitimize buying a copy of this journal, let alone the dozens of other works of art contained therein.

What really spoke to me about the creation and sustenance of Paredon Records, was its need in a time of great national instability and moratorium. Paredon offered recordings and artwork of several different disenfranchised and misunderstood cultures and figures. One of their records was a Vietnamese-American reading Ho Chi Minh's speeches. This access to the words of an "American enemy" would be the first time that people could listen to the eloquent elaboration of this national leader. It puts a voice to a disembodied, inaccessible and foreign revolutionary that would allow people in the US to understand just why it was that people were willing to die for communism in Vietnam. Paredon Records wasn't created to sell records, it was created to save lives and to educate and foster an arena for a paradigm shift in the heart of the listener. To hear someone's words spoken in a way that the listener can understand and identify with, or conversely, to hear songs of a revolution in their native tongue, all helps to unify people in a time of great discordance.

Though I greatly enjoyed and benefited from most of the contributions to *Signal*, there was one article that flew right over my head. The researchers presenting a dissertation about Yugoslavian partisan memorials are an architecture scholar and a doctor of political philosophy, respectively. The essay is seemingly geared more towards someone with a working knowledge and vocabulary of both socio-politico and anarcho-politico discourse. As someone who is not well versed in either of those arenas, the essay was a bit too convoluted to hold my attention, though I was very impressed by how well researched the article was. Likewise, an essay about typography in the mastheads of outlawed Spanish anarchist newspapers is glibly interesting to me but would be particularly engrossing to someone with a better knowledge and interest in such topics.

While some essays are more geared towards informing the reader, and some read as a call to action, all the articles contained in the third edition of Signal bring something to the table. This journal was truly a delight to read and I would highly recommend it to anyone who has any interest in social justice, art history or cultural artifacts of people's struggle for liberation.

—Courtney Vigil

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

BIG TIME YOU AIN'T NO FRIEND OF MINE

I'd like to believe that the good guys always win, but I know that is rarely the case. The music business in particular teaches us that we need to be dicks in order to be successful. That is the lesson I come away with from **Good Vibrations,** which I don't suppose was the intent of the filmmakers.

Good Vibrations is the story of Terri Hooley, a music fan in Belfast whose DJ gigs go down hill when the Irish Catholics and Protestants start fighting aka the Troubles. Most of his former friends have chosen sides and those that haven't have been intimidated into leaving Belfast. Hooley decides instead to open a record store in the heart of Belfast called Good Vibrations. When a kid comes into the store asking for Buzzcocks records Hooley discovers punk rock. His first show is the local band Rudi. Hooley likes them so much he starts a record label to release their record. He continues to release records by Irish bands, most famously releasing the Undertones first 7". However in this film the only bands mentioned are Rudi, the Outcasts and the Undertones.

Good Vibrations follows Hooley's twrials and tribulations as record store owner, label manager and scene guru. His enthusiasm and sincerity is admirable. He does it simply because he likes the music. The fact that he needs to make some money to keep it going takes a back seat to every decision he makes. Even the teenaged Undertones negotiate a deal better than him. His family life suffers. He gets beat up by skinheads. Yet he soldiers on.

Although I like the message that you should do things for the sheer joy of it, the end credits listing the numerous times the record shop has closed and reopened simply bummed me out. But Hooley is a really nice guy. (facebook.com/goodvibrationsuk)

I was adding **The Punk Singer** to my Netflix queue and I decided to check out some of the "because you added" suggestions. Not every music related film pops up when you simply type in music. **Teen A Go Go** was one of the suggestions though the description was a bit generic. " This documentary chronicles the sudden profusion of spirited—and sometimes surprisingly talented—young rock bands in the mid-1960s." Still it sounded like something that might be interesting so I added it to my list.

When I finally got around to watching **Teen A Go Go** I was really surprised to find this cool documentary. That somewhat lame description fails to mention something pretty important. **Teen A Go Go** is about the Fort Worth, Texas garage scene in the '60s. Some the bands featured are Mouse and the Traps, the Elite, Larry and the Blue Notes and the Kandy Kanes. There are interviews with the band members, DJs, TV hosts, go-go girls, people who put on shows, people who recorded the bands and almost everyone who goes into making the scene.

Like every other city in the '60s the teenage bands of Fort Worth started flourishing after the Beatles performed on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. However, Fort Worth also had the influence of R&B bands touring the Chitlin Circuit who stopped in town. Mix that in with some small town attitude living in the shadow of the larger city of Dallas and you have the making for a fun garage scene.

Although the Fort Worth bands never got that big, they were stars in their town. The records they released are still be appreciated. Garage rock fans such as Lenny Kaye, Billy Miller and Ira Robbins all attest to the coolness of the scene. Even with this all this adulation the bands of **Teen A Go Go** remain pretty humble. They discuss the heyday with a bit of nostalgia, but also a realistic attitude about what it was.

A copy of the VHS **Everywhere Else Makes Me Sick Volume One** arrives in my *MRR* mailbox with a handwritten note from the coordinators that says "Who has a VCR? E-mail zine reviewers". It seems none of them do. So I say challenge accepted. I have a VCR and am not afraid to use it.

Everywhere Else Makes Me Sick Volume One is a short collection of bands from Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. There is one song each from TV Freaks, Born Wrong, Kremlin, Black Baron, Paul Jacobs, Snake Charmer and Burn Victim. The bands are shot well, no shaking, with single cameras that get right into the action. The music is recorded with the camera mic so the sound isn't that great. These performances would probably be fine appearing on-line somewhere, but I think it was a good idea to put it on VHS. (makesmesick.blogspot.ca)

To cement my image as *MRR* film intellectual I also want to mention that I rounded off last month seeing **Too Much Johnson. Too Much Johnson** is an uncompleted film Orson Welles made before **Citizen Kane. Too Much Johnson** was to be shown as scene introductions to the Mercury Theater's production of the play of the same name. It was never shown, as Welles never finished editing it in time for the play's debut. The play closed quickly so the film wasn't needed after all. The footage was thought to be lost, but a few years back a copy was discovered in an Italian warehouse.

The first of the three segments of **Too Much Johnson** was the only one Welles edited. As such it has a storyline. Even so it is not great storytelling. The scene involves a man having an affair with a woman who is married to another man. The husband discovers them, but the man sneaks out the window. The woman has a photo of her lover. As her husband tries to take it from her he rips it in half. Now he only has the top of the man's head to use in his search.

The second scene involves the husband's search for the man including slapsticky shots of the man running with a ladder on the roof of a building as well as the husband taking the hat off every man in sight. Scene three involves everyone arriving in Cuba.

Too Much Johnson may not be the best thing Welles has done, but you can see where he was going with his filmmaking. Seeing Joseph Cotton swing a ladder around rooftops in New York is pretty cool especially when you know that he was doing his own stunts and it was probably pretty dangerous. (bampfa.berkeley.edu)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, % Maximum Rocknroll, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. No guest list necessary. carolynkeddy.com

"YOU GUYS AREN'T PUNK... YOU'RE POSERS"

-DAN O, NYC, 4-20-14

LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS

RECORDS

Send **two** copies of vinyl or CD-only releases (if on both formats, please send the vinyl) to **MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, USA**
We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Releases without vocals or drums will not be considered. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

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(MB) Mariam Bastani
(WB) Will Blomquist
(GB) Graham Booth
(KC) Kyle Canyon
(MC) Mitch Cardwell
(WN) Robert Collins
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(FF) Francesca Foglia
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(DG) Dan Goetz
(GH) Greg Harvester
(MH) Mike Howes
(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(KK) Kenny Kaos
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(BL) Brad Lambert
(RL) Ray Lujan
(MM) Marissa Magic
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(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(FU) Ray Suburbia
(KS) Ken Sanderson
(FS) Fred Schrunk
(KR) Kat Smith
(MS) Martin Sorrondeguy
(AU) Andrew Underwood
(DV) Diana Vashti
(VX) Vanessa X

ACCIDENTE – "Amistad Y Rebelion" 12"

Socio-political melodic/pop-punk from Spain. Wait, sorry, *really amazing* socio-political melodic / pop-punk from Spain. If it wasn't for the fact that the lyrics are in Spanish, I wouldn't have been surprised if you told me this band came up through the New Brunswick, NJ basement scene—or at least were from somewhere on the East Coast. Equal parts melodic hardcore and straight up pop-punk, with beautiful vocals by Paulina. All of this together sounds like something in between the earnest swagger and jangle of the MEASURE [SA] and WORRIERS and the infectious, angered energy of LA FRACTION—or maybe like the too short-lived Syracuse band NO CONNECTION. The liner notes have the lyrics in the original Spanish, along with English translations—always awesome. The lyrical content is especially great. While most anarcho punk bands are simply anti-this and anti-that, and most pop-punk bands are just "I love my friends and partying," ACCIDENTE splits those sentiments right down the middle. "*Que motivos no son pocos amistad y rebelion (There are plenty of reasons to fight for friendship and rebellion).*" If you like bands like RVIVR 'cause they're injecting a little social thought and politics into the current pop-punk scene, you'll love this. I just listened to this record five times in a row, and I'm only getting more and more into it. (FU)
(Blondes Must Die / Contrastzi / Distribuidora Soroii / Grita o Muere / Halo of Flies / In My Heart Empire / La Agonia De Vivir / Pifia / Tranzophobia / Veganismo es Respeto / Walking is Still Honest)

ALERTA! – "Mierdoso" EP

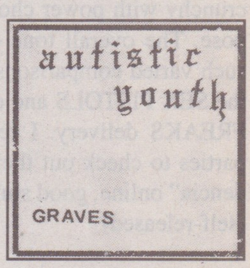
ALERTA! from Spain has a take on hardcore that brings mid to late '80s Spanish bands to mind. "Busca Una Salida" has some extremely catchy guitar work. Rapid fire hardcore done well. Solid stuff. (MS)
(Discos Enfermos / Trabuc)

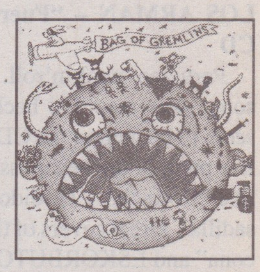
ANGER BURNING / EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT – split LP

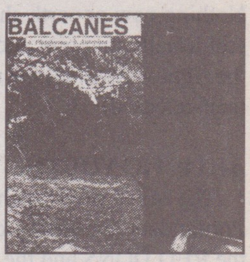
ANGER BURNING (Sweden) and EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT (Germany) have very similar sounds, which will be very familiar to anyone who's listened to hardcore for the last 20 years. They both play out-of-the-box D-beat. I hate to say it, but it's DISCHARGE worship, with a tiny bit of ANTI-CIMEX. I know it's too easy and simple to lump them into a sound like that, but in this case I think it fits. EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT even thanks DISCHARGE. The two bands also have another similarity; the vocals sound very distant. Sure, sure there is your dose of reverb on the vocals but in both cases it sounds like they're singing 40 feet away from the band in a tunnel. This is not necessarily a bad thing. You know the drill, black-and-white artwork, images of war in both the art and lyrics. We even get the "dropping its bomb" lyrics. I've always liked listening to "war is bad" lyrics so I'm not going to knock them for that. ANGER BURNING didn't have any variation song to song—it was all a little one note. EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT threw in a guitar solo here and there and mixed it up a little. They also throw in a DISMACHINE cover. I'm completely burned out with this whole sound, but if you want more D-beat crust maybe you'll like this. (MH)
(Aktiver Aufstand / In Plastik / Rawmantic Disasters / Spela Snabbare)

ANGRY GODS – "Pressure Contained/The Mass"

A haunting and original record from this Chicago band on their second release, not falling far from last year's stellar debut EP. Taking equal parts BOTCH, the BODY and WALLS, they've created a very full sound that pounds and pummels away with small reprieve found in ambient feedback and drone. The two songs balance each other well, "Pressure Contained" being the more active of the pair. It is a crushing epic that stays busy and interesting while building to massive crescendos then sliding into a noisy goodbye. "The Mass" follows with a weighty, repetitive tone that approaches maximum intensity from a slightly different angle of its predecessor. Seething with spite the second track replaces high energy with a slower tempo and a punishing finale. A solid record front to back that will keep fans of hardcore, sludge and ethereal jams stoked. (RM)
(Crippled Sound / Bastard Sloth)







LOS ARMAN – "Dependencia" CD

This was mistakenly tucked in my box for review and in spite of my initial skepticism, I am very glad it was (sorry DZ!). The band is from Lima, Peru and has produced an album of eleven songs (and one cover) that somehow are diverse enough to make each song stand out from the last while maintaining a thread of unique writing that unmistakably unites the collection. Pegging their style is trickier than I expected, possibly because this three-piece play music that is more than just the catchy, blandly produced, mid paced punk I want to chalk it up to. Each song is anthemic, sometimes because of the pulse of the song, others because of layered vocal choruses. The guitar noodles around and can be surfy, punchy or crunchy with power chords played with purpose. The overall tone of the album strikes such varied comparisons as AGAINST ME!, the SEX PISTOLS and even a distant COLA FREAKS delivery. I recommend interested parties to check out their video for "Dependencia" online, good stuff. (RM)
(self-released)

LOS ARMAN – "Fuera de la Realidad" CD

Peruvian punk'n'roll. This collection of songs was recorded back in 1999-2004 but seem to be getting the CD treatment just now. Bar punk in the best possible way with songs like "Borracho y Perdido" and "Horrible Pesadilla." Great covers of the RAMONES "Bocona" and ESKORBUTO's "Historia Triste." Nothing new or earth shattering here, but it's still usually on point and rock'n'rolling in all the right ways at all the right times. (FU)
(self-released)

AUTISTIC YOUTH – "Graves" EP

The new seven-inch platter from these Portlanders sits pretty comfortably between the RED DONS and the last FROZEN TEEN EP in terms of musical stylings. Add a '60s fuzzbox to the lead guitar and there you go. Really, there isn't much derivation from other bands putting out music in the lineage of the WIPERS. This recording lacks a certain snappiness (not enough treble?), and as such sounds sort of muddy. Well, not muddy, but just not good, and lacking snap. I don't know, maybe more treble? Maybe something about the drums? The point is it sounds flat and thin. Also the lyrics are super boring. Lyrics about your vague politics and vague feelings of despair feel rote and boring when you chant them in a super mopey way. Where's the hate, boys? Or at least some genuine angst? (LP)
(Sabotage / Taken By Surprise)

BACK TO BACK – "Narcissist" EP

This is not a positive band. This is not a youthXcrew band. Instead, these hardcore-rooted, anguish-filled tracks leave me feeling reassured that being pissed, and hating everyone around you still exists in punk somewhere. Lately, things have felt lost in translation between shock value and fashion versus actual good music, and records like this make punk feel real again. I heard this band is touring the West Coast in June, and I've also heard they kill live. Highly recommended. (KR)
(540)

BAG OF GREMLINS – CD

Raw, fast grindy/thrash by two dudes from Oshkosh, Wisconsin with mid-to-high pitched vocals their high range but it's more O.L.D. (speaking of, James Plotkin mastered this) or the ACCUSED than say BATHTUB SHITTER. The riffing goes from sharp and heavy near-death metal like tone to zig-zaggy and twang thrown in for unpredictability's sake which works more often than not. "Small Talk" is an ace tune as it just wastes no time getting to the point. "Junkyard Dog" rips through thirteen seconds of pure grind perfection. The intensity continues with the incredible "Overflow." For just two members they make a nice racket and can make a rather good grind/thrash attack. Granted the vocals are a bit nuts and take awhile to get use to but their great riffing and drumming makes up for when they're not always "on" with the mic work. Just don't feed 'em after midnight. (JD)
(Speaks Volumes)

BALCANES – "Plataforma/Autopista"

Kinda surprised this one made it through the "is this punk?" gauntlet, but I'm happy it made it into my mitts. One track of dark and mysterious droning madness with sporadic vocals lingering in the dark, totally minimal weirdo sounds maximizing the possible contribution from one "note" and one drumbeat over the course of three minutes. The flip is a rock'n'roll take on the same formula (which is to say that it's barely rock'n'roll, but it adds the attitude into the equation). The VSS meets CHROME, but owing thanks to the world of drone and psyche rock. I am, if nothing else, interested. (WN)
(Discos Humeantes)

BIZARRE UPROAR / CHARRED REMAINS A.K.A MAN IS THE BASTARD – split 10"

Looking back at MAN IS THE BASTARD after all these years is a difficult proposition. Their story well documented, and sound, which is so unique. On this release, sludgy hardcore with lots of added noise. This 10" (originally released on 7" in 1993) I feel finds them at their peak, which somewhat came to a close in 1995. There is nothing speedy here. Everything with a big low-end stomp as if they were playing powerviolence on a slower speed. Throw in a bit of noise and effects and what you end up with still sounds fresh. BIZARRE UPROAR were for the most part a noise group, and honestly I always thought this release sounded like someone taking a recording of the MAN IS THE BASTARD side, chopping it up and playing it backwards. In other words it's noise, but it sounds like it's played by a band with conventional instruments. Noise and very wonderful noise at that. (MH)
(Deep Six)

BLINDED – "Zivot Bez Sance" EP

BLINDED hail from the Czech Republic and do the D-beat crust thing. I'm fairly certain this is a demo that has made it onto 7" and I think that helps the sound. They play their take on D-beat with a rawness and slight lo-fi-ness that I enjoy. They also changed speeds a little and wrote some songs. What I mean is, every song on this 7" doesn't sound the same. BLINDED contains members (or former members) of KRÜGER, SANITÄR, CLIMAX, PNS, DEMARCHE, FEAR OF EXTINCTION, and PROPAGANDA. The reason I list all these bands is that I think you can hear this is not their first time around the block. (MH)
(Hard Bones Production / Phobia / Rawmantic Disasters / Terror Night / Véva, no info)

BLOOD PATROL – "From Beyond and Below" CD

Fun, retro vibes thrash/hardcore from Darmstadt, Germany, drenched in B-horror devotion and recommended for heshin' use only. The drummer is a fuckin' *machine*, and they've got more than enough hot lixx to bring the full thrash assault on tracks like "Generation Dead" and "Full Thrash Assault". There's the occasional break from the formula—"Crossed" introduces some ST. VITUS-inspired doom wails, nice—but if you've found yourself lamenting the lack of KREATOR worship in modern hardcore, you might have just found paradise. The CD also includes their slightly rawer 2010 demo as a bonus, and it's as good, if not even better than the newer, more polished recordings. (WB)
(Drunk With Power)

BODY BETRAYAL – "Soft Cage" 12"

All judgment and obvious musings about

the one-sided 12" 45 format aside (to be fair, the flipside is etched, but still…), I am into this record. Simultaneously epic and erratic song structures with a crushing production, songs like "My Gender is Queer" demand repeat listens to fully digest. There are blasts, discordance abounds, and the vocals reach back to a time when emo wasn't a dirty word and instead implied a personal intensity. The title track that closes is a perfect (almost D-beat) burner with a mandatory mosh crammed into the middle, and a seriously dark heavy outro—a combination that kinda sums up *Soft Cage* as a complete work. On second thought, maybe the format is perfect? I just want to move the needle back to the start when it's over…it's not as if I don't want more, but rather that I want more of *this*. So I'll listen again. (WN)
(Our Voltage)

BOTTLENOSE KOFFINS – "Gayzilla" LP

When I picked up this album for the first time and saw the cover I rolled my eyes so hard I got a little dizzy. Godzilla in Brooklyn hipster garb spewing a rainbow on a mountain is not a good introduction. Luckily for my patience, the music that followed was just as stupid as the cover but in a hilariously intentional way. These party surf punks have embraced adolescent puke-joke punk like a religion, and have recorded a highly entertaining and musically solid surf LP. While the lyrics flirt with being most easily compared to the BLOODHOUND GANG, the music is actually memorable and the lyrics are so stupid I love it. Also, who said the gays can't laugh at themselves? These dudes seem like pros at it. Also, there is a surf rendition of a *Star Wars* theme called "Sith's Up"! How cool is that? (DV)
(Get Weird!)

BREATHILIZÖR / THRILLKILLERS – split EP

Context is important, and without it I can easily imagine a young punk completely skipping by this record. THRILLKILLERS are MOTÖRHEAD meets THIN LIZZY, and dish out two filthy fukkn live rippers. Get into it. As for BREATHILIZÖR? The best piss-takers on the planet manifest themselves as a heavy metal act that you have to hear to believe. If there were any justice in the world, then this Ohio crew would be uttered in the same breath as HARD SKIN and CRUCIAL UNIT. But while there is, in fact, no justice… fortunately there is this: *"we jerked off on that sacred book / just to please us / oh yes, oh yes / we shit on Jesus' fucking arc of the covenant / with our cunts wide open / spewing menstrual blood / you know that thing with the Jesus facial imprint on it? / I forget if it was a grilled cheese sandwich? / yeah, more fun than a fucking barrel full of Satans"* (WN)
(Agromosh / Nuclear Ass, no info)

BRONCHO – "It's On/Kurt"

Wait a minute. I already know the A-side cut. How is that possible? Is it a cover song? I don't think it's a cover. Maybe some other band has covered it? Fuck, I'm confused. Anyway, it's a deliberate, methodical, mesmerizing sort of song. For some reason, and I couldn't tell you what that reason is, it reminds me of the EMBARRASSMENT. It's all about a catchy guitar riff and monotone, but captivating, vocals. The B-side cut continues in the same style. I will be on a mission to find a copy of this record for myself. Seriously good. Only 300 pressed. P.S.: In looking through some old text messages, I found my buddy, Mike Webber, sent me a link to the A-Side track about a month ago. I was right! (KK)
(CQ)

BROWN PLAID – "Chico's Revenge" EP

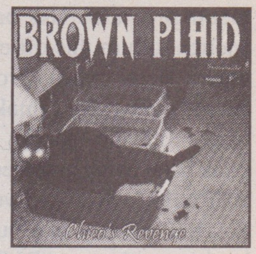
Wow. I LOL'ed. I cannot believe shit like this still exists, but I guess there will always be a new generation of goofball high school punks (P-U-N-K) that hate jocks and straightedgers and just wanna get wasted on their parents' liquor and play house shows with whatever "punk" bands are in their general region, even though those other bands are kinda lame ska punk or emo or sort of alternative bands. For the amount of shitty dumb punk records that have been made, this is pretty much exactly what you would ever want to hear. Hopefully Fat Wreck Chords and Asian Man won't get their hands on this. (GB)
(Splits McGee)

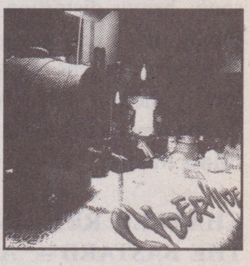
BRUT – "Footsteps" 2xEP

This is the last release for Strongly Opposed Records and they went all out on a double EP with heavy vinyl and fancy gatefold packaging. It looks pretty cool and the band rips when you put the thing on your turntable. It's faster hardcore that sounds straight out of the '90s with some thrashy guitar squealing added, but the metal never spills over into chug-chug territory, just crusts it up a bit. The vocals are handled primarily by a raspy-throated female screamer, with some backups from one of the dudes and most songs are despairing rants about politics or dominant culture. Personnel from notable Swiss bands WORNOUT and CWILL play in this band, and the two decades of punk experience shows. The label wanted me to mention that trades are welcome if you need the excuse. (BL)
(Balkongpønker Vinilers / Strongly Opposed)

BURNING SONS – "Built to Fall" CD

OK, things get complicated. Old people are easily confused and sometimes taken advantage of. Keeping that in mind, poor ol' Mr. Doug Moody of the legendary Southern California label Mystic Records somehow got baited into putting out the three records by BURNING SONS compiled here on the *Built to Fall* CD. I know Mystic had some questionable musical decisions in the past but this selection as the first music out on the label in over twenty years takes the cake. The BURNINGS SONS don't necessarily do anything wrong, they pump out the jams, they seem to be making things happen for themselves in Milwaukee. It's just that I found this collection hard to sit through, even as background music. The predictable songs and painfully screeching vocals (seriously, think nails on a chalk board backed by your





first high school punk band) got me agitated enough to turn this off every time. The frustration stems mostly from the music, don't get me wrong, but I think a bit of it may have to do with the identity of said high school punk band being assumed by the middle aged BURNING SONS. Even their TERVEET KÄDET cover was a bust; not disappointed but happy it's over. (RM)
(Drunk With Power)

CASANOVAS IN HEAT – "Belvidere/Destiny St."

These are two pretty catchy pop songs. It's part power pop, part late '80s alternative and a little punk. Think of later NAKED RAYGUN or later MOVING TARGETS or a later part of lots of punk bands from that era. The songs are up-tempo and bouncy. There's a clean guitar that's a bit overpowered by the spacey later era HÜSKER DÜ sounding one (there's that late era crap again). The vocals are sung and fit the style well. In fact, if you told me that this came out on Taang! in 1989, I'd say "cool." (PA)
(Katorga Works)

CEMETERY – 12"

Elusive Chicago deathrock band that has finally gotten around to pressing their material on vinyl. This record acts as a discography of sorts compiling their demo tape with a song released on a comp. Powerful songs evoke nods to CHRISTAIN DEATH and KOMMUNITY FK with DARBY CRASH on vocals, making you question if this really came from the Midwest and not LA. Like the demo tape, there are atmospheric interludes of synths and muffled vocals "Voices from the Floorboard" divides the record creating auras of dark minimal synth and coldwave. "Grave Dance" stands out as their strongest song; heavy distortion is applied to pretty catchy riffs resurrecting Roz from his grave. This record leaves me wanting new material; luckily there is an LP in the works. Get this for the time being to satiate you need. (AP)
(Mass Media)

CHARRED REMAINS A.K.A. MAN IS THE BASTARD – "Abundance of Guns" 10"

A 10" re-issue that replicates the art and track order of the ten-track 1993 self-released 7" *Abundance of Guns* (the 1992 S.O.A. recordings 7" original issue featured nine songs, omitting the opening noise/experimental bonus track "Regression to Birth" and had different sleeve art). It was M.I.T.B.'s fifth recording session and, really, a landmark record for the band, as it totally completed—or at least markedly advanced—the fusion of everything that had shown up in various aspects in their recordings previous. It would come to further meld to form the identity of the band: industrial and ambient noise, progressive jazz-influenced dual bass playing, lumbering, crushing heaviness with growled bellowing vocals, curt, brutal snippets of hardcore (something only coined as "powerviolence" by the band themselves in a recording session for the split with AUNT MARY five months before). MITB then tied all these wild paths of music together with even wilder song titles, and sandwiching them between intense political samples to forward–well, "unique" doesn't even begin to really cover it–but their world view anyhow. That insanely creative, personalized totality of vision between the lyrics, meaning, music and artwork is why MITB remains so unique and fresh sounding two+ decades later. This session did mark advancement in the recording of the classic Connell / Kenyon / Barnes / Wood line up, with a noticeable jump in sound quality that continued through their subsequent releases, making this is easily a great starting point for beginners to the band. However, fans who have worn their old copy into the ground will find a volumetrically louder and fuller mastering. Sadly, most of the lyrical topics are still current—we're still fighting stupid wars in the Middle East, there're still too many guns, and the entire planet is probably a bigger "slave to the bean" (coffee bean) than when this came out. It's still relatively affordable to own an original copy of this release, but listening to "Semen in the Eye Socket of Thomas Lenz" twenty three years later (a song related to the beef that the bassist Eric Wood had, over the unofficial/bootleg 7" release of NEANDERTHAL tracks in Germany in 1991) it's probably prudent and pretty okay to have these recordings out legit and easily available on the market. On "okra" green vinyl even!! Essential! (KS)
(Deep Six)

CHRISTMAS – "Appetite for Selfdestruction" CD

Here's some punked-up shock rock from Germany with songs about getting drunk, fucking, fighting, and skating. There're call and response gang vocals, standard mid-tempo guitar work with few leads, and some questionable lyrics about sexuality that I guess are supposed to be OK because there's a lady in the band or something, as well as some vague swastika and running-with-the-wolfpack lines. I kind of don't care enough to analyze things too deeply here because people trying this hard to shock me are a big whatever. For fans of TEXAS TERRI or the MIDNIGHT CREEPS or people who don't realize self-destruction is two words. (BL)
(Cargo / Kidnap / Wooaaargh)

CLITSHITTERS / EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT – split EP

I have a feeling this record was headed my way before the coords even dropped the needle; certain kinds of ineptitude and stupidity tend to end up in my lap and a band called CLITSHITTERS fits that bill pretty well. But instead of snarky comments about ill-conceived monikers, I have nothing but praise for both bands and their (slightly) different takes on maximum distorted D-beat mania. CLITSHITTERS aren't hiding anything under their sleeves, pure raw noisy hardcore done just right, while EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT tweak the guitars between DISCLOSE and HELIOS CREED, a contrast that works well to stave off the potential monotony of the genre. Without even realizing it, I had jammed this thing three times straight. Killer. (WN)
(Rawmantic Disasters)

COL.LAPSE – "Enfonsat" 12"

This is solid, melodic hardcore very much in the vein of DAG NASTY. It may be a little bit heavier on the pop side of things, but the songs are still driving and filled with anthemic choruses. Musically, the song writing outshines lots of similar bands and the playing is solid. There are a good amount of hooks and catchy guitar lines to keep things interesting. Vocally, it's pretty much what you'd expect from melodic hardcore, yelled but intelligible singing (unfortunately my Catalan is shaky at best; OK, nonexistent). On the whole, it makes for a good record. Check out the song with the subtle acoustic guitar, it's good. (PA)
(Amendment / Can't Keep Us Down)

CONSTANT FEAR – "Silent Scream" CD

A new release from Glaswegian anarcho grandpas CONSTANT FEAR! These guys (that is, Joe and Watty) have been kicking around since the early '80s, but never released much past some demos. It's sorta tragic, really. They've toured with everyone over the years: from CONFLICT to DISCHARGE to ICONS OF FILTH, but no vinyl releases, boots or anything from that era. Oh well. These tracks were recorded over the past ten years. It's crusty, it's politically charged, and while it stands up well enough on its own, you'll end up wishing you had something, ya know, older to compare it to. Somebody reissue these guys for chrissake?! (FF)
(Mankind Disaster)

COPSTABBER – "Officer Down" CD

With a name like COPSTABBER, you know you are not going to get romantic evening music. These guys from Baltimore are out to shake it up and rock while the beers are a pouring. Not for the politically correct either lyrically. This reminds me of early '80s hardcore that was out to freak people out and early '90s drunk punk. This was never my favorite style of punk but there are guys (maybe guys in beat up leather jackets?) who like this stuff. Gruff vocals with fast basic music that has no aspirations to be anything more. (RL)
(Zodiac Killer)

CREULSTER – "Potatoe Boys" LP

This rules. True weirdo punk encased in high school doodles and random words and phrases. They managed to fit a good amount of sound clips on the A-Side, accompanying the manic that fills out each song. I don't know where this band is from, but based on the amount of creativity put into the record, I can imagine they are from the Midwest or somewhere else where true mutants roam. The B-Side of this record is NIRVANA's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" with commentary of some redneck making fun of it. As obnoxious as it is, it's fucking hilarious. Then there is some more music from the actual band. Oh wait, there's another sound clip. If your life is boring, buy this and make it less boring. (KR)
(All We Know / Root of Evil / Turbine Piss)

CRISIS – "Kollectiv" 2xLP

Chances are that if you've never heard CRISIS, you've probably heard a band trying to sound like CRISIS sometime in the last four years. In the past few years this band has definitely become an inarguably classic, and essential, punk band. They are one of those bridges between the virulently political anarchopunk of England in the late '70s/ early '80s and the nearly completely apolitical post-punk/goth scene that came in the wake. Minimal guitar lines, melody shouldering bass lines, shout/sung lyrics of desperation and frustration, drums you can set a watch to—you know, "marching music." This is an incredibly beautiful looking collection that brings together the *Hymns of Faith* 12" (just reissued a couple of years ago by this same label) with all the bands 7"s, along with a handful of live and demo tracks. Everything on here has been available before on either the *Holocaust Hymns* CD that Apop Records put out a few years ago, or *The Guilty Have a Past* LP collection on State Laughter—but what those records don't have is an amazing re-mastering job that make these songs sound *way* better than they ever have. The sound is simply massive. The art for the gatefold is beautifully laid out with pictures of the band, news clippings, and an odd manifesto-cum-eulogy by David Pearce—written at the time of the band's existence. Honestly, this record could replace five or six records by the current wave of bleak dark punk revivalist bands in your record collection. History has shown that CRISIS is a band that has stood the test of time and that they're possibly more important now than ever before. Unless you find some original pressings, this is the only CRISIS release you will ever need to own. Get it. (FU)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

CRUTCHES – "Lurad" LP

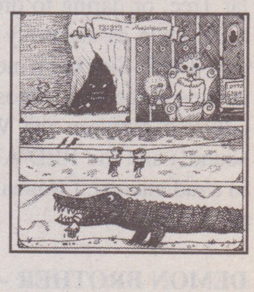
Right off the bat this has a heavy DISFEAR vibe, like this is a D-beat band that is more heavily influenced by modern or third generation D-beat than DISCHARGE themselves. That can be a good, bad or neutral thing depending on one's own views re: D-beat purity, but it's definitely the strongest impression this LP gives off. There's also a strong MEANWHILE influence in evidence as well, in the simple solos and flat but passionate vocals, so it isn't all rock'n'D-beat all the time or anything. Five or six years ago this would probably have disappeared into a crowd of similar bands, but since this style is on the wane at the moment it has a little room to shine. There's nothing remarkable here, but it's a solid slab of 21st century D-beat-inspired hardcore and the art (for what it's worth) is first-rate. (AU)
(Distro-y / Not Enough Phobia / Rawmantic Disasters)

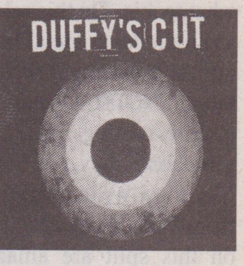
THE CRY! – "Dangerous Game" LP

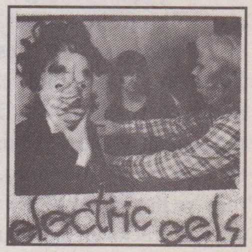
This is the second album from Portland's the CRY!. I have to say they have the power pop thing locked down. The first track, "Discotheque," (originally released as a single) comes out of the gate way too strong—the most obvious JOAN JETT riffs, syrupy harmonies, and cheesiest lyrics—I was ready to really dislike this. However, once that song's out of the way, they get into a groove. It's hard to avoid cliché with this style of music, but there's a way to make it sound somewhat fresh. I'd say the CRY! achieve this more often than not. The production values are so over the top that this album lacks any tinge of anything that could be considered punk, but that's clearly not what they're going for. Four spotty-faced kids with silly haircuts having a bit of a laugh—isn't that what rock'n'roll is supposed to be about? (AM)
(Taken by Surprise)

CYDERNIDE – "Wastoids/I Hate Myself" EP + CD

I had an impromptu party once. Well, there were only three of us and it wasn't at my house. Nothing but cider was ingested and only songs praising fermented fruit beverages were played. You know. CHAOS U.K., DISORDER, the WURZELS! By 5pm we were rolling in empty bottles. Laughing hooligans. This is a 7" that comes with a CD with the same songs plus others. It's not so good. There's one of those square blobby things on the back of the CD that only douchebags with over-priced phones can read. Minus 100 points. The tracks not on the 7" are better. The first song sounds like GASH with VINNY VINCENT on guitar. The female singer has a nice, gravely voice like the one chain smoking at the end of the bar you want to talk to. The rest is bad Oi!-inspired punk with wanky riffage. Compare to the DISTILLERS. Cider me up landlord! (RO)
(self-released)







DARK BEACH – "Scream Queen" EP

DARK BEACH summon up sounds somewhere between SUBTONIX and EMILY'S SASSY LIME and the BROOD in a dark, dark basement that you probably shouldn't go down into but something is drawing you closer… Two women with big hair making sounds for trashy up-all-night types with snotty lyrics addressing the mundane realities of seeing a UFO while on your lunch break at the Dollar Tree, or daring to dream of screaming in a B-Movie as unearthly things occur around you. The B-Side has a more *rock* / less ghouls-in-the-garage feel, almost reminding me of a collision between the WIPERS (that guitar sound!) and the RED AUNTS (that attitude) in a rad manner. I wanna hear more. (LG)
(self-released)

DEMON BROTHER – "Beyond the Veil" 12"

This record reminds me of a sticker by a certain Bay Area funeral doom band "If it's too slow you're too young." This record is just that, slowing down powerviolence, which in turn will probably turn off all the speed freak maniacs. DEMON BROTHER manage to push sonic boundaries in the vein of harsh noise projects, while also creating a sludge-ish sound without sounding too beardo. Intense agonizing sounds pull you in, this record is screaming at you through the floorboards desperately clawing to get out. (AP)
(Iron Lung)

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION / NOISEAR– split CD

An absolute brutal split between Chicago, IL's (formerly from New Mexico) NOISEAR and France's DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION. NOISEAR play a fast modern grindcore sound that's very discordant and somewhat techie. On this release they have an ever so slight death metal leaning but the sound is not far from their *Turbulent Resurgence* full length. NOISEAR has a unique talent in that, despite writing super fast, brutal and techie grindcore, they don't lose site of the song. Yes they write songs. Tracks are different from each other and memorable. The tracks on this split are amazing. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION is a relatively new band, new to me, and they grind like maniacs. They also mix up the sounds on each track. "Andrii Ryazanov For President" starts with a Swedish grind sound, changes to more of a hardcore track". "Un De Trop" has almost pig-squeal vocals. "Plaisir D'Offrir" is frantic and crazy sounding. "La Debile" shows they're not afraid to get weird and silly. None of their tracks are a minute long and the entire 20-track CD is fifteen minutes long. This split came out a while ago, maybe ever a year ago and I love it. (MH)
(Power It Up)

THE DESTRUCTORS – "13 13 13 Malchance" CD

The DESTRUCTORS are at it again. This time it's a concept album on the number 13 and luck—or a lack of. This is what punks sounding old, but not selling out, sounds like. The riffs are pretty standard issue contemporary radio punk, and the recording is a bit sterile, but the passion is still there so it doesn't feel like a money grab or a product for self-gratification. The singer has a great, growly British snarl and the lyrics are clichéd but direct. It could have done without the BEATLES cover of "Eleanor Rigby" though, that was a bummer. (DV)
(Rowdy Farrage)

DEUS EX MACHINA – "The Sound of Liberation" LP

This band has been around for over twenty years, and to my understanding they're commercially successful in their home country, Greece. This comes across in their music, mid-tempo to plodding, clean and restrained, muted. At best, they get a bit of a groove going, but overall it's tame and tepid. The songs sound like they're written for big stages and clear sound systems. The lyrics, in English, touch on political and social subjects, but in a vague manner. The delivery, like the music, lacks energy and anger. There's a song subtitled "06/12/08"—the date a teenager, Alexandros Grigoropoulos, was killed by police, touching off intense rioting—and literally, the mix on this track is even *more* subdued than the rest of it. Like they're worried people would get upset! At this point, they seem like a band people would listen to before they got into punk. (JM)
(The Lab / Labyrinth of Thoughts)

DIME RUNNER – "Can't Express/Drink it Up"

Smirking and snotty '77-inspired punk rock outta Southern California, right in line with the legions of STITCHES and SMOGTOWN followers. Catchy songs, slick recording, and attitude up-front… all the trademarks are here. If you're looking for a transcendent record that screams and buzzes above the dross, this certainly ain't it. Worth a couple spins though. (MC)
(Wanda)

DINOS BOYS – "Last Ones" 12"

Debut LP from these Atlanta punks, featuring familiar faces from BEAT BEAT BEAT and the absolutely killer PREDATOR. While they may retain the drive and sleaze of those bands, DINOS BOYS place much more emphasis on the pop side of things. There's a vague HEARTBREAKERS influence to them that keeps things in the gutter, but the twitchy catchiness of their songs is what ends up coming through the most. Not a dud found amongst the slew of tunes featured here. Douchemaster and Rob's House fans oughta hop to quick-like! (MC)
(Oops Baby / Die Slaughterhaus)

DISPOSE / INFEKZIOA – split LP

Sweden's prolific DISPOSE offer six tracks, blanketed in thick guitar distortion of simple skull rattling riffs stretched over relentless D-Beat thumps, capped by short bursts of vocals howls. A simple fixture to the early ANTI-CIMEX template by way of DISCLOSE, but chipped out with enough character and free association between the 30-odd years of D-Beat influences that it's commanding enough—listen as lyrics assail atomic destruction, Nazis and oppression. Their side is entitled "Rawpocalypse Now." Indeed! On the flip is the vinyl debut from Spain's INFECKZIOA; ten tracks of a mangled, disjointed hardcore, somewhere between the more chaotic elements of a 1980s Italian hardcore BCT tape and some blown-out Columbian hardcore flexi that still eludes your want list. The music is disjointed rumble of feedback, dropped in shrill solos, clunking drums with aggressive WRETCHED-style vocals, an over the top-that-race to spit out the lyrics—like they're being read at that moment for the first time by the singer who places them kinda enough where they should land—making it sound even more whack and/or desperately savage. The lyrics are in Basque, but the translations are just as insane and awesome. "Don't buy food in the supermarkets 'cause it's plastic transgenic food—dammit! Their only thought is getting money!!" Yes! Chaos! They're also really topical to their home country for short hardcore spasms. Cool split. (KS)
(Rawmantic Disasters)

DOWNTOWN BOYS – "Callate" EP

Weird shit right here! Loud, fast, fuzzed out angry punk from Providence, RI. Unique use of sax, an instrument I cringe to hear in punk usually from growing up in a ska town. It's spazzy, melodic, and raw. Ripping vocals over straight forward punk riffs à la PRIESTS and BIG MOUTH. This is one of the most fun 7"s I've listened to in the past few months. Cállate y escucha, punks! (DV)
(Sister Polygon)

DUFFY'S CUT – CD

From the looks of this Philadelphia band you would think you were going to get street punk. But they have a rough mod soul thing going on instead. This reminds me of a non-political REDSKINS or the soul stuff on the first JAM LP. Former members of the BOILS, VIOLENT SOCIETY, and CRANKED UP!, seven songs on this disc that groove from a band that probably get the crowd dancing live. (RL)
(Oi! the Boat)

DUSTY MUSH – 12"

DUSTY MUSH are a fuzzy French moderne garage band who seem to have spent a long time in the TY SEGALL school. Usually that is a turn off if the band doesn't use the style in their own way and write catchy, fun songs. Fortunately DUSTY MUSH do both, plus their vocals sound a bit more sinister than SEGALL's. As the album progresses they seem to stray into a bit more psych aspirations as well. I like it. (CK)
(Howlin' Banana)

DYSTOPIAN SOCIETY – "Cages" LP

This album seems to be a vinyl issue of a CD that was first released in 2012. The cover art does little to grab my attention, but does clue me in to what this might sound like. Italy's DYSTOPIAN SOCIETY employs familiar sounds across the spectrum of '80s UK anarcho punk, under a dark shade, especially due to the very *Death Church*-esque guitar tone and dirge-y quality. Aside from a few upbeat songs and an expressive vocalist, the LP remains mostly glum and devoid of texture, and the recording is a bit flat. I know I say this a lot in my reviews, but I think pulling the three or four strongest tracks here would have made a better EP. The band is good and there are some cool ideas on here, which leaves me hoping that their best material is yet to come. But for those who can't get enough of the dark peace-punk style, there's enough here to sink your teeth into. (MA)
(Mass Media)

EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT / G.A.U. – "Distort Berlin" LP

Man, it seems like all of a sudden there's this new band called EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT and holy shit do they have a ton of releases! I've heard them described as just a crust band (I suppose due to the name as much as anything) but they play a very pleasing hybrid of '80s European hardcore and '90s US/Euro crust, seamlessly blending a massive MOB 47 influence into a mix that also includes blast beats and wah pedal guitar noise. It's a very solid approach that helps the band stand out from the generi-crust pack for sure. Also, a little birdie told me that their recent split 7" reviewed nearby in the mag is a killer as well, so keep your eyes peeled for that as well. On the flip, G.A.U slow it down from 45 to 33 RPMs for a set of rocking, heavily reverb-ed hardcore punk, that despite the label copy doesn't sound a fucking thing like CONFUSE or GAI. DESTINO FINAL meets MANIACS is a much closer formula—with a very slight Teutonic thrash edge that mostly comes out in the short frantic solos and a few riffs here and there. A fun listen on both sides for sure, definitely worth picking up if you're interested in a taste of what's good in Berlin these days or are just into quality hardcore in general. (AU)
(Aktiver Ausstand / Rawmantic Disasters)

EASTLINK – LP

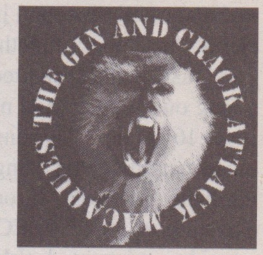
Fittingly named after a suburban toll road in their native Melbourne, EASTLINK eloquently reconfigures the repetitive driving-on-the-Autobahn feel of, say, *NEU! 75* until it suits the local atmosphere. Starting with a riff—insidious, relentless and intelligently thuggish, so classically *Orstralian*—the all guitar sound swaggers and swings like a pub emptying out after last call. On first listen VENOM P STINGER attempting the motorik beat came to mind, but this is not a "if you like this you'll love that" type of sound, and I feel like I am beating my hands against the keyboard in an ape like fashion attempting to articulate the pleasures and pains of this disc! The tape that preceded this LP was one of my most listened to things of the past year, soundtracking my banal endless existence walking home after another night shift in retail-land, through desolate skyscrapers and emptied out streets. This record took me a bit longer to warm to, I think because it's not *quite* as relentless / claustrophobic / total; there's some space and even uh, space rock on certain tracks. The lyrics are fragmented and political, questioning in a thoughtful perceptive style that seems so much more authentic than another prepackaged slice of anarcho pie. The fact that seemingly every person in a decent / exciting band in Australia is in fifty other equally decent / exciting bands is quite humbling. EASTLINK features people from TOTAL CONTROL, UV RACE, LAKES and probably thirty other bands, and they are fucking great. Another genius group sounding the death knell of the neoliberal dream. (LG)
(In the Red)

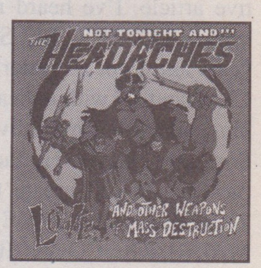
THE EJECTOR SEATS – "...Like Apple Pie..." LP

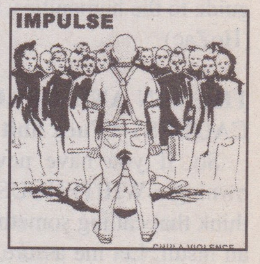
First off, the packaging is a complete waste of a quality gatefold sleeve. Bad computer fonts and cheesy TV set artwork. And that title. ...*Like Apple Pie*...? Weak! Real purdy splatter vinyl. Someone's got bucks. Throw on the first side and... Damn! Punch-in-the-balls guitar and a song reminiscent of the SPITS. Then the next song comes in with some funky bass?! Cannot stand that. I'm sorry. Honkies should not play funky bass. Not unless you're the BIG BOYS and, as any good punk, I skipped over those songs. Song titles like "Carpool Trap" and "Status Symbol Slump"? One song sounds like the DEAD KENNEDYS and the rest are attempts at slick energetic punk. They probably jump around a lot. Barf. (RO)
(Collision Course)

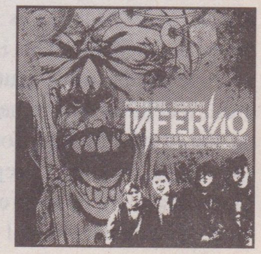
ELECTRIC EELS – "Jaguar Ride / Splittedy Splat"

The sound of America grinding to a halt and then a new beginning, *Easter Everywhere* for ingrate *artistes*; seekers of ooze and ointment rejoice. This is my favor-









ite band of all time, and here are two of their classic hits finally together on one 45, after previously being separated on a CD comp and a long out of print (and now very expensive) triple 10" comp. The songs compliment each other magnificently, being of the more tough, nihilistic rampage through the American existence style of ELECTRIC EELS song; car rides, mistreated girls, flammable shoes, split atoms burned through with that insurgent falling apart guitar frenzy. Listening to this will make you want to transform your life dramatically; it's close to the most perfect music committed to tape in the history of puny human existence. Nothing any "punk" will do (or has ever done) will touch the majesty/destruction of the ELECTRIC EELS, and this 45 is an absolutely perfect introduction to the sound, though I do advise grabbing everything you possibly can preferably all at once. DAVE E is the coolest vocalist, JOHN MORTON the best guitarist / artist the world has offered us, the sound created out of the primeval ooze between ESP-Disk and CAPTAIN BEEFHEART in the grim desolation of the early '70s Midwest. It's impossible to write about, so you must just go out and buy the entire discography. Especially since all of the random, disparate discographies and compilations have different versions, different songs; there seems to be no definitive article. I've heard rumors of more unheard ELECTRIC EELS existing, and a few years ago I got a mysterious mixtape from a Cleveland DJ with unheard solo DAVE E genius, which left me salivating and unhinged. Someone (maybe HoZac) must chase all of these leads and create the ultimate ELECTRIC EELS (and DAVE E AND THE COOL MARRIAGE COUNCILLORS) library! At any rate do yourself a favor and grab this, and the Rough Trade classik just for a beginners guide to the humanities. (LG)
(HoZac)

THE GIN AND CRACK ATTACK MACAQUES – "Fuck Shit Up" CD

So, if you have never even considered owning a WHITEHOUSE album, you might think that calling something "unlistenable" is an insult. Let me assure you that I intend no derision when I say that the debut CD from the dubiously named GIN AND CRACK ATTACK MACAQUES is both awesome and pretty unlistenable. This industrial punk outfit has one of the most brutal and non-musical drum machines I have heard in a while. Laid on top of that fucking foundation are creepy and gross rock riffs, repeated ad-nauseum. The vocals are also great, spoken with so much detachment that I though at first that they were samples. It's almost like an entire record of intros to DYSTOPIA songs. Sometimes they get more electronic, either ambient or trip-hop, and it all works, probably because they're altogether more alleyway behind a sweaty goth nightclub than sidewalk in front of a punk'n'roll bar. The CD closes out with them sounding like a not embarrassing ATARI TEENAGE RIOT, and that is pretty hard to do. Top marks, but still hate that name. (LP)
(Baboon Butt Bombs)

GOLDEN PELICANS – "Burn Everything/Hell's Bucket"

A golden pelican? Perhaps an albatross of sorts? A cross to bear for playing the horned one's music in smokey rooms in the netherworld. This record is a little shining ember of tough, blues-based punk with a singer drenching you in saliva as he spits out hymns. Along the lines of POISON 13 and the JONESES. Lick it up. (RO)
(self-released)

GUMMO – "Every Summer They're Droppin' Like Flies" CD

This was pretty cool at the beginning, when it was just some skronk noise, but then it turned into some kind of Chicago Touch n Go '90s worship. I'm into that era, but in general anything that is any kind of worship / rip off deal, especially when it's worship of super aggro nerdos à la Steve Albini or David Yow, I'm kind of like, ew, you know? Part of the reason I'm cool with that stuff is because it's in the past. Also, seriously just a touch of NINE INCH NAILS. But also, I checked on their internet presence and though this song is not on this particular album, literally the first song title I spotted was "This Song Has AIDS," so in conclusion this band can fuck right off. (MM)
(Bellaphon)

HEADACHES – "Love and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction" CD

This Aussie band does the really poppy punk thing with similarities to ALL and BLINK 182. This has some really good songs and others that seem a little flat. The vocals have a power pop tone but don't pack much punch. So the YUM YUMS they are not but over time may develop into something more attention worthy. (RL)
(Boss Tuneage)

HEAVY NUKES – "Second EP" 12"

So if you didn't hear the "buzz" about this band when they debuted, they are pure and simple SHITLICKERS worship—and are one of the few bands to really master that sound. For those who have an ear for raw Swedish hardcore, this may be the closest any current band will get to the real thing. After all, this band is from Sweden. (KR)
(Rawmantic Disasters)

HIGH ANXIETY – LP

A fellow *MRR* reviewer saw me picking up this record and said "Oh, that's the band that sounds like DORY TOURETTE AND THE SKIRTHEADS." I put it on and can't really come up with a more apt description. So imagine the aforementioned band (do people outside of the Bay Area even understand this reference?) if they had cheated death, added some more pedal steel guitar, got a little more Americana/roots-rock-y, dropped all of the creepy lyrics about child molestation and kept drinking just as many 40s as they always did. There's a heavy S.P.A.M. Records vibe happening here. If you've never heard that band, these guys sound like laid back rock with a serious nasally crooner on the vocals. There aren't many punk bands that play this style of music and do it well, but HIGH ANXIETY does. (GH)
(Bandwagon)

HIRNSÄULE – "No Dogs No Dogma" 12"

Pretty solid melodic punk / HC from Osnabrück, Germany that's *very* spirited, honest and musically all over the place. They change up the tempos a lot but not enough to make you lose interest. "Realize" is straight up proper '80s hardcore. The title track mixes driving tempo and guitars and some rad lyrics about fighting against punk clichés. "Liquor Store" sounds a lot like a slow take on DKs "Too Drunk to Fuck" but even that's pretty fun. Odder still is the speedy punk'n'roll of "Teenage Tragedy" which I'm *certain* is a ZEKE cover. Also, points for singing in Spanish—not once but twice. The crazy-ass spray painted vinyl that also uses the raging dog with a top-hat art from the cover is also a nice touch. (JD)
(Umstur)

HOLLYWOOD MASSAGE VIBRATION – "The Great Adventure of Heroic Mind Voyager" EP + CD

This Japanese band and this release are downright odd. First you get a 7" and CD as one release. Three tracks on the 7" and six on the CD with two of the 7" tracks also on the CD. Next the band is all over the place musically. A little rock'n'roll. A little punk. A little pop punk. A little discordant rock. A little dub. A little scronky no wave guitar. So much so it took me a couple listens to warm

up to them. The first track has melodic jangly clean guitar and a bass player filling all the empty spaces. The second half of the track takes us on a discordant walk, then back to a choppy clean almost no wave guitar. "Trouble Punk" is frantic and speedy and goes through a number of changes. This is probably my favorite track. Song three has simple guitar that wanders and the singer rambles. But then we get a taste of punk, which builds and builds. Too bad I can't stand the vocals on this track. The melodic indie rock sounding second half of the track is driving me up the wall. "Ass Ass In" is dubby, noisy art rock and includes a harmonica. "Ass Ass Dub" is full on dub. But they do throw a noisy racked in the middle. Sounds like a dub version of the previous track. "Babylon" groove is making me sick to my stomach. Sounds like bad rave-up rock'n'roll. Vocals are not grabbing me again. This track is a cover of a LÄ-PPISCH song. (MH)
(Love Over Voltage)

IMPULSE – "Chula Violence" EP

IMPULSE has two speeds, fast and faster. Fastcore, thrashcore, powerviolence, call it what you will, this record is a good first release for these SoCal boys, it's got just about everything you would expect from those aforementioned genres: fast parts, good breaks, even some gang vocals. You can definitely hear an INFEST influence, especially in the guitar riffs. The only problem with this record is the tone; the production seems to be too high for this style, which makes the songs sound too polished. It's punk man, dirty it up a little bit and you've got one helluvah record. (KC)
(To Live A Lie)

INFERNO – "Pioneering Work – Discography" 2xCD

I like discographies. Especially when they come with a sixteen-page booklet like this one. This is rather epic: 56 remastered tracks by this core German punk band, with material from 1983 to 1992! Both these CDs seem never-ending, with 30 and 26 songs apiece, and while that might be a challenge for review, it's definitely a feat for the band! Collected here is material from INFERNO's 1984 record *Tod und Wahnsinn,* their 1985 split with the EXECUTE, their *Son of God* EP from the same year, their 1986 *Hibakusha* record, plus half a dozen compilation releases, including *MRR*'s *Welcome to 1984*! The booklet really complements these tracks well, with detailed stories about the band's inception and evolution, lyrics in both German and English and lots of pictures, flyers and posters. They recall the difficulties of recording and the surrealities of booking and playing shows, getting lost on German highways, sleeping on damp hard floors, nicking consoles from mean, drunk club owners, getting their record onto Jello Biafra's top ten in *MRR,* getting Pushead to do some cover artwork, losing members, touring, lock, stock the fucking lot! Reading the band's long and intimate story, while simultaneously listening to these songs and hearing the sound develop, is a pretty cool experience. Their sound definitely went through phases but all of them have their highlights, whether it's the Oi! and streetpunk tracks, the ones that call back to early Deutschpunk (those kaltpunk riffs on "Liebeslied" and "Massenmord"!), the one-minute ragers ("Ronald Reagan" actually clocks in at 00:46 seconds), the thrashier, more metallic tracks (Their *Hibakusha* LP is mean and menacing)... All of it is worthy and the sound covered here is so varying that it's like taking a trip through '80s hardcore punk by way of what bounced off their material (that said, the Japanese influence is definitely audible on their split 12" with the EXECUTE). If you do still buy CDs, this would be a good one for your collection. Never heard of INFERNO before? Here would be a grrreat place to start! Lastly, for the record, "Ram It Up" was INFERNO's *first* song, in 1981, never an S.O.D. original. Danke. (LA)
(Beer City)

IRRITATION – "Nattsvart Framtid" LP

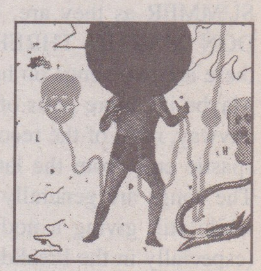
Swedish mangle, eschewing en vogue raw distortion for classics like power, typical (but necessary) mid tempo D-beat rock'n'roll tracks (just a couple). My only complaint is that there aren't really any hooks, something I think the genre needs to achieve perfection, but IRRITATION charge through with kång fists in the air. (WN)
(Embrace My Funeral / Phobia / Rawmantic Disasters / Svoboda)

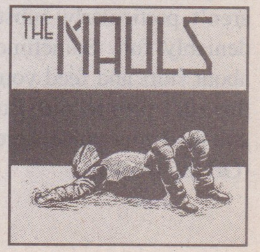
THE ITCH – "Tales of Hard Luck and Woe" LP

Jesus… when someone describes something to me as "high energy rock'n'roll," I wanna plug my ears so full of tissue that they'll never let another sound in ever again, but that's exactly what the ITCH is… and they're really good!! They bite a little bit from the last records by the MINUTEMEN, when those dudes started slowing it down and writing songs that stretched out past two or three minutes. Their singer sounds a little like smooshing together D BOON, MIKE WATT and ED FROMOHIO actually. In a lot of ways, they sound like just good solid Midwestern '80s indie-punk with little to no pretense or cool-guy posturing. They do a perfect job of building up on lurching rhythms that explode into big, satisfying conclusions. The only weak spots for me are when they rely on standard three chord rock riffs for an entire song without adding anything new. It's like, you might as well cover "Johnny B Goode" or something. Those spots are few and far between though. Oh…and there's that song where they talk about raping hookers. Idiot fucking move, dudes. Good job tainting an otherwise great record with predictable and boring misogyny. (GH)
(Wee Rock)

KICKS – "Leather Godzilla" EP

Snotty Australian DIY punk made by kids for kids. KICKS' minimal vinyl output has been collected on the *Shakedown: Original Brisbane Punk* CD but Timmy 540 has done us the service of putting together this limited edition EP compiled from tracks released on even more limited cassettes in 1980 and 1983. Rough around





the edges bedroom pop, with elements of SWELL MAPS, DESPERATE BICYCLES, and ZOUNDS. Great stuff. Track this down if you can. (AM)
(540)

LA BELLA – "Recomposition" EP

So, let us get this straight. I normally don't want to hear someone recreate '90s, fall on the floor emo. I like CURRENT and INDIAN SUMMER as they are, I don't want a new DON MARTIN THREE. That being said, there are two songs on here that just get me. Maybe it's more parts of a couple songs but anyway, most of the record follows the more spastic emo from the late '90s and beyond. The songs are generally fast and screaming while still giving a nod to the earlier stuff (especially in the breakdowns). On the other hand, "Non-Linear Architecture" has this very MOSS ICON quiet part with spoken vocals that really do the job. On the second side of the record, "Petrichor" has parts that sound a lot like NATIVE NOD in a cool way. On the whole, this may not be something to go crazy about, but oh those bits of greatness are there. Not sure it needs to be said but comes with a lyric booklet that includes recommended reading and listening lists. (PA)
(Valley Press)

LINDSEYS – "Religious Sexts" LP

Sex, drugs and rock'n'roll. That's the easiest way to describe this album. Here we have a garage band that play fucking fast, and generally lean on some fairly poppy hooks. But they also will have flashes of rudimentary hardcore sprinkled through out the album. Just how the CLASH casually dropped in ska numbers, the LINDSEYS casually drop in braindead hardcore. The finished product sounds like if the guys from HICKEY tried to write an album that sounded like FYP. I mention HICKEY because, the songs they wrote seemed to speak about an idealized-version of what a wild and crazy junkie punk lifestyle was all about. They could even make hangovers sound glamorous. Songs that make you think the world is your playground. The LINDSEYS approach songwriting in a similar way, although their delivery is a bit more crude and lowbrow. I'll use their song "Dick Shaped Heart" as perfect example. The songs aren't particularly substantive, but are undeniably fun. Sometimes you wanna think about stuff and feed your brain. In that case, this isn't your record. But if you wanna party and feed your pulse, here you go. (FS)
(Off the Books)

LOOSE HEART – "Paris 1976" EP

I think I heard about this punk rock. This is some 1976 pre-punk French fry superstar band with members of ANGEL FACE and STINKY TOYS and later new wavers MATHEMATIQUES MODERNES et SUICIDE ROMEO. This first song is real tasty bass-heavy balls-to-the-wall shit rock. You could tell they was hard rockers, but they dropped the schtick and started playing stripped down hyper speed two-chord songs. It is real cool (esp. for 1976!!), but not sure any of the three songs will have staying power for me. (GB)
(Danger)

LOS DOS HERMANOS – "Alienor/ Paye Ty Chatte"

LOS DOS HERMANOS is a duo from Bordeaux, France. They play a fuzzy, surfy, moderne garage rock. The A-side is a dreamy, catchy song enhanced by interchanging male and female vocals. I could do with less overlaying fuzz, but otherwise the song is great. The B-side is a medley of two TY SEGALL songs, which sound faster and messier than the originals with more reverb and yelping. It's pretty cool too. (CK)
(Six Tonnes de Chair)

LOS GATOS LOCOS – "Even Sociopaths Get the Blues" CD

First, no. Sociopaths don't get the blues—*that's why they're sociopaths*. Now that I got my nerdrage out of the way... this is some hot chicken pickin', stand up slappin' psychobilly action. This shit ain't bad—and, having spent most of the last twelve years living in a small town in rural Southern Illinois, I've seen more bands do this *terribly* than I can even remember. If only these guys had played last year with the NUMBER 9 BLACKTOPS when I saw Bubba Blackwell jump two running helicopters on a Harley at a bike dealership—that would have been *perfect*. These fellas have been honing their chops since 1994, and you can tell. They describe themselves as "psychobilly for people who hate psychobilly" and honestly, yep. (FU)
(Zodiac Killer)

THE LOUD ONES – "Time to Skate" CD

Goddamnit this is pretty fucking dumb. So the LOUD ONES started in the far off and mist shrouded times of the early 1980s as FLATBROKE, who apparently just played covers. Then, these feisty swamp yankee skate rats started playing mid-tempo hardcore with a loose rock feel and a serious skate vibe (but no metal). They recorded a pair of demos it would seem (both are included), and broke up without a vinyl release. This release is mostly just new recordings of those old songs, with just four tracks not represented on the vintage recordings. None of these songs are life changing, but I guess if you like caveman skate punk this is just that. Unfortunately, the songs are awash with juvenile bonehead sexism. That turned me off pretty hard, but if you love early '80s Massachusetts punk, this handy discography will bolster your collection. Also, there's a super cute piece in the liner notes from the bass player and lone continuous member's mother. D'awwww. (LP)
(Beer City)

MADJIVE – "À La Royale" CD

MADJIVE play big production rock'n'roll in the vein of ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT. The music is high energy and well produced. The band wears suits. They sound good and look nice. It is just too slick for me. (CK)
(Maximise)

THE MANGES – "Plan Honolulu/I'm Giving Up"

This isn't anything that's going to change the world, but if you're a fan of driving, straightforward, melodic and catchy punk rock, you will enjoy this record. I happen to be a fan of that sort of thing and I'm enjoying myself, just tapping my toes and bouncing my head. Italian, if that matters to you. Limited to 300. (KK)
(One Chord Wonder)

THE MAULS – "Totem" EP

Early 1990s sounding DC by way of Touch and Go inspired stuff. This reminds me a lot of that rhythmic rockin' thing that JAWBOX and TAR (who coincidentally toured together in '93) did so well. The opener "Totem" starts slow but builds up nice with a big drum and guitar tone. "Facetime" changes up and goes a lot faster and gives a NAKED RAYGUN vibe. Wasn't too crazy about the two songs on the flip as "My Rites" made me think of the OFFSPRING (OK not *as* pukey like that, but just something kinda icky sounding). The last song flops around with too much noodling and not enough rockin'. A talented band that's probably better live than on record. (JD)
(self-released)

THEE MIGHTY FEVERS / THE MORBEATS – split EP

A cosmic present-day homage to TEENGENERATE in the form of a split 7"EP. Consider me interested! My exposure Kobe's MIGHTY FEVERS is limited to their great LP on Dead Beat from a year or so back, but I gotta say that their two tunes channel the manic energy and fuzz-fi scuzz of TEEN-

GENERATE at their most primal and aggressive. They have the sound down shockingly well. If it's a pure ape job, then it's the most faithful I've heard in quite some time. Their cover "That's Alright Mama" has me thinking that it's exactly how Fink & Fifi would've done it during the *Get Action* days. Fuckin' spectacular, no lie! The MORBEATS can't help but be swept up in the tornado that came immediately before them, but their showing isn't without spark: two 90-second burners, one of which is a cover of "Sex Cow." With the inspiration running throughout this record and the off-the-charts great MIGHTY FEVERS tunes, I must say that this has skyrocketed to the top of my shopping list. With only 100 copies in existence (!!!), it'll be damn tough to locate. (MC)
(One Chord Wonder)

MISCONDUCTERS – "Hypnopaedia" CD
Not sure, really, that this really fits the genre of this esteemed magazine. A Brazilian three-piece plays math rock for musos. Not punk. Certainly not metal. Not all together bad, but I think you'd have to a guitar noodler yourself to appreciate this self-described "power trio." I guess the main chap used to live in the UK, where that incarnation supported the likes of DISCHARGE, ENGLISH DOGS, DISORDER and BROKEN BONES. Unfortunately, they sound not a whit like any of said esteemed elders. (RK)
(self-released)

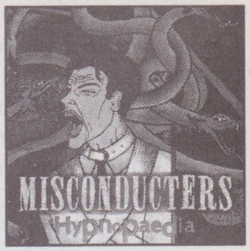
THE MONS – "Asshole" EP
The second I put the needle to this record and its insanely fuzzed out bass hit my ears I knew I was in for a treat. This is straight ahead, no frills, no bullshit punk fucking rock. Six songs (in just under seven minutes) that waver on hardcore—with only the snotty vocals and melodic tendencies reigning in it. On top off all that is that classic beefy Chicago punk sound. The recording sounds *huge*. The only band I can even think to begin to compare them to is the TRAITORS—which may be a lazy Chicago punk comparison, but fuck if I don't hear the same kind of snot meets frustration. All the folks in this band have put in plenty of time over the years, in such bands as APOCALYPSE HOBOKEN, MEXICAN CHEERLEADER, LYNNARD'S INNARDS, M.O.T.O., and the MASHERS and it seems as they've gotten older they've only become more frustrated and pissed off—the song "Burned Out and Bleeding" seems to sum it up perfectly: "Too old for suicide and too young to die / Hanging on by a thread, I got no reason to try." And "Church on Fire" with the chant "make room for Wal-Mart!"—*goddamn!* The package the record came in had a MONS button that was given away at their eighth show. Apparently they make a new button for every show they play. Some people might think that kinda gimmicky, but I think it's rad as fuck to have something new at every performance to show appreciation for people taking the time to come see you play. Oh, and the cover of the record was done by Raymond Pettibon. Honestly, you *really* should check this one out. (FU)
(Underground Communique)

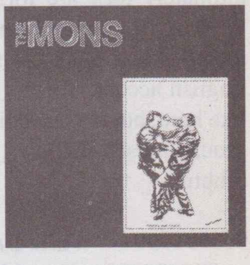
MORAL HEX – 12"
A cold slab of icy post-punk/goth from the Pacific Northwest. MORAL HEX had a mind-melting demo that came out in 2010 (which actually included four of the seven songs on here) but then there was nothing for a while. I've been waiting to hear the follow up, and unfortunately, I'm somewhat disappointed. The re-recordings of old songs are interesting to listen to, but honestly, the rawer versions were much better. The sound here is clearer, and the vocals sound *so* much stronger, but some of the energy that was initially there seems to have been replaced by slickness. This is the moment when a post-punk band starts to become a goth band—which, honestly, is fine to this reviewer. But at the same time, I think that re-recording those earlier songs may have been a misstep. This would have been much better as an EP of three brand new tracks—especially considering the new tracks are fucking killer goth. But if you loved the demo, and only wished it had better production, you'll love this. (FU)
(Mass Media)

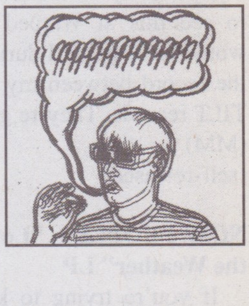
MORAL VOID – "Breach/Wolves"
This is from a while ago but still sounds pretty fresh. I can't really find much info on this band, but they're from Chicago and did a split with YOUNG AND IN THE WAY last year that I liked. They play a crusty, doomy version of hardcore that bashes it out pretty good, it sounds like they started with the idea to do a faster version of THOU and tweaked it around into their own monster with a little black metal here and D-beat call and response there. This is for the grim kids, all the lyrics are about how the world sucks and are screamed almost intelligibly. Only two songs but they are both ragers. Dig it. (BL)
(AC13)

MORNING GLORY – "War Psalms" CD
Second full length from the "other" chap from LEFTÖVER CRACK. Actually, they share much of the driving metal influences of STAR FUCKING HIPSTERS, with not as much of the pop, and none of the ska. Considerably more IRON MAIDEN (albeit with some horns and strings in there occasionally) than CITIZEN FISH. And it really works. Very impressive. Very rocking. Very right on. (RK)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

MUUY BIIEN – "d.y.i." LP
This record really feels as if its whole is less than the sum of its parts. So many things, especially when considered in isolation from the rest of the record / music / what-have-you, that this band does are pretty right on the money, but it still feel like this misses when the whole picture is considered. The album is structured well, with creepy instrumentals drawing the listener into the choppy, relentless nervous energy that drives almost every song on the record. This can draw you into a real tense state if you let it. The recording and the instrument tones are really tight and also work towards this atmospheric goal. The songs are standard punk songs







with just enough of a twist on them to preach to the faithful, but also bring more fringe elements into the fold. The guitarist has a knack for taking no wave chords and fitting them into choppy post punk riffs, and then diving into something a little more epic (in a way that reminds me of FUGAZI). All in all, I'm reminded of BRAIN F≠, but choppier and post punk. Also like BRAIN F≠, I find I can say lots of good things about these songs, but ultimately they are forgettable. Perhaps it's the lack of dynamics over the course of the record. Maybe it's the singer's fake pseudo English accent. There's a lot for someone to like here, but if you're like me, it's just background music. (LP)
(hhbtm)

999999999 – "White Devils" EP

999999999 was a side project of Anthony Macbain of TUNNEL OF LOVE. I am assuming the "was" since the four songs on this EP were recorded between 2007-2008. The songs are super lo-fi. If you don't mind distorted vocals, harshly strummed guitars and drums too loud in the mix (I don't) you will find some nice pop garage-y tunes buried beneath the noise. (CK)
(HoZac)

NO ANGER CONTROL – CD

I probably would have been hella stoked to see this at Warped Tour circa 1995. I would have pogo'd during their set and filed the record between my LUNACHICKS and TILT records. They're good at what they do. (MM)
(self-released)

NOW PEOPLE – "Love, Sex, Death, and the Weather" LP

If you're trying to keep up with Mikey Erg and Dan from MODERN MACHINES, this should definitely be on your shopping list. Obviously, this falls into the dreaded pop punk realm. The immediate bummer for me is the lyric sheet. It's just 300 words jumbled up in a can and splattered into a jumbled blob on the page. Either print the lyrics, or don't, guys. Don't waste the space! Musically, it's actually pretty great. Catchy, and not too formulaic, for pop punk. The vocals, and what lyrics that I could make out, were a little too breathy and emotional, and not my cup of coffee. I think that's it, though. Strain them vocals up a bit, print the god damned lyrics, and I'd probably really like this record. I bet these guys would sound great on a shitty PA at a house show, too. (DZ)
(No Breaks)

NUCLEAR CULT – "Cruel Routine" EP

Here's a pretty killer hardcore record from Berlin, fast and to the point with no filler. It's not quite a powerviolence record but the band changes up speeds a lot with some grindy riffs and a few sludgy parts that take off into blasts. The drums don't let up the whole time and the guitars speed through a lot of hardcore riffs, some of which get a bit technical. The vocals are in German, which I don't speak, but this music sounds honest to me and definitely bears the mark of veteran players despite being the group's second record. Ex-members played in Y, SOLID DECLINE, and PINK FLAMINGOS, who I believe is the same band that did that expensively collectable split with MAN IS THE BASTARD like 20 years ago that you should probably just download. (BL)
(Heart First)

NUKES – "Fascist Perverts" EP

Nihilist Chicago punk that's clearly obsessed with fucking. It's fast, simple and distorted. There isn't a whole lot you can say about bands like this. They are playing really basic dirty punk songs. And every song is a bratty "fuck you" or "I don't care." It's definitely reminiscent of the spirit of early GERMS or ANGRY SAMOANS but less thought out. Just simple dirty gross punk. And actually pretty good. (FS)
(Man in Decline)

OBEDIENCIA – "El Ángel Exterminador" EP

There's an urgency in the first chord and drum hit that just sucks me in immediately, similar to the way the OBSERVERS LP did. I never spent much time with OBEDIENCIA's first EP, but I love their song on the *Sound The Alarms* comp, and the second track on this EP is just as strong! Upbeat, danceable, with brilliant vocal hooks. Actually, the vocalist is what really carries this band—she's so soulful and confident. That shit is cranked right up front, almost too loud, but it totally works. Don't get me wrong, the instrumentation is great too, but the singing pushes this band to the top. My critique has to be the slight distortion on the vocals, which gives the whole thing a little garage quality. Not a bad thing, I just personally prefer more organic vocals, especially when the singer is this great. Add a little reverb instead of the distortion and let that vocal track soar! Just one guy's opinion. Otherwise this EP is perfect, and the more I listen, the more I like! (MA)
(Sólo Para Punks)

OBLIVIONATION – "Cult of Culture" EP

OBLIVIONATION hails from Lowell, Massachusetts, features members of OUT COLD, BLOODKROW BUTCHER and PROCLAMATION and is super tight. And I don't just mean that in the metaphorical sense, because these guys have some very real tight musicianship skills—or at least a lot of well-channeled energy and rage (so yeah, it's kinda good!). This EP took a minute to get released, but their 2012 tape was killer, so I had a gut feeling this was going to be good. (I'm also glad to see they kept the sinister set of eyes as a motif for their artwork, it's wicked.) What I like about this band is that they don't actually have a super distorted sound yet they still sound like wild and unhinged madmen in the best possible way—no bullshit, just razor riffs, plodding bass, pissed vocals, energetic drumming and steamroller deliver—what more do you need really? There's enough stompiness here to keep you brooding, and enough speed to keep you moving, and the song compositions will have you moshing around your room, then throwing yourself out the window in a fit of adrenaline. Just what the doctor ordered—I'll take it! (LA)
(Man in Decline)

OBNOX – "Used Kids" EP

More of a psychedelic garage rock album than punk but the dissonance of it is just punk enough to be *MRR* material. Very drone and pulsing but a bit meandering and at times boring. The lead guitar's screeching wail is solid but, as the main melodic factor outside the many times repeated vocal harmonies, it gets old quick. Recorded well, and mastered to fit the drone sound, this EP is certainly listenable, especially when the sax gets weird and freaky, which is the best part of this song that spans both the A- and B-Side of the 7". Good background music, but easily ignored. (DV)
(12XU)

OBNOX – "Louder Space" LP

Anyone out there still a stranger to Bim Thomas? Dude's done stellar shit for years in variety of notable bands, but his recent years up-front with OBNOX may just bury them all. There's been a legit shit-ton of OBNOX vinyl unleashed in the past couple years (I reviewed the debut LP in these very pages a couple years back), but *Louder Space* destroys all that came before it. Strangling guitars alongside criminally great grooves? Draping soul over some ugly punk crunch? Playing with legit feeling? Yes to all! This LP is a true peak into Thomas' world, a world that's varied, uneasy and pretty goddamn

thrilling. *Louder Space* hooked me immediately and I can already feel myself getting lost in it months from now. Great, great stuff! (MC)
(12XU)

OPEN FINGER IS A BROKEN FINGER – "Love, Jealousy and Hate" CD

As you may have guessed from the band name, we are dealing with some meathead tough guy hardcore. Grunted lyrics about fighting, girls doing ya wrong, and looking down your nose at society. We got some real boot stompers on this disc. I'm sure these guys are responsible for some gnarly Helsinki circle pits. Most of this album is your average meat and potato hardcore, but every once in a while they will bust out in some VAN HALEN guitar solo. Most notably in the very first track. That song rules!! First, the guitar intro is a direct rip off of "Eye of the Tiger"! Then they copy their chorus from D4's "A Pyre Laid for Image and Frame". And last but not least, throw in a solo that could have been on *Appetite for Destruction*. A perfect song. If only the whole album could have been this good! (FS)
(self-released)

PAGANS – "What's This Shit? 1977/1979" 12"

Full disclosure: this record came into existence thanks to Record Store Day, which will make half of you barf and the other half of you salivate. The A-side of this platter features a live set from 1979, recorded at the legendary Drome record shop. I'm pleased to report that we're presented with something far better than the mudd-fi excavations that have been foisted on us so many times. Capably captured by their MIRRORS and STYRENES brethren, this live performance pretty much kills and offers us a brief glimpse of one of the very best American punk bands at their prime and on their home turf. The flipside offers up the nearly unthinkable: three distinct takes of "Six and Change": the issued take (the band's debut and one of the most highly coveted punk singles in existence) and two unreleased takes. Having heard them all now, they made the right choice! The unreleased takes aren't bad, but they're not exactly some mind-blowing keys to the puzzle either. Packaged smartly with aped "Punk Vault" design, this record will make PAGANS fanatics happy as hell and probably stands a good chance of converting a few RSD vinyl investors into new PAGANS fans, which is a moderately cool thought. (MC)
(Light in the Attic)

ΠΑΝΙΚΟΣ – "The War Continues" LP

Released for their 25th anniversary, this compilation of Thessaloniki, Greece's PANIKOS features their complete eleven-track *The War Continues* demo from 1990 on the A-Side, then a mixture of six compilation and unreleased tracks from 1996 to the present on the flip. PANIKOS have existed intermittently on the Greek punk scene, but the juxtaposition of their original grimy lo-fi demo and their current double-bass infused metallic attack is a succinct history of the lineage and evolution of the band. The more recent material seems to struggles with itself—it's not as gloriously dingy and dark as their original material, nor quite pushed across the finish line in metallic precision and heavy impact, but the juxtaposition of the new and old does underline the similarities and strengths of all the material. The original demo is a classic and worth the price alone because it's totally awesome—crudely hewn crustcore reminiscent of CRUDE SS with dark, creeping dirge bookending furious hardcore fits. Unmistakably punk, it reinterprets and swipes metal influences to create its own path, solos, dirge, heavy riffing but none of it ever gets caged enough in style to warrant direct comparison to people with way better studio budgets, and the raw, lower-fi recording just makes it even moodier. The songs, strong anthems with stomping choruses, spit out by furious, growling vocals, rise it to another level. Nice liner notes and photos, no lyrics. Killer record! (KS)
(Labyrinth of Thoughts / Now or Never / Scarecrow)

THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE – "Musical Garden" LP

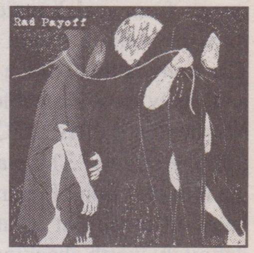
I kind of feel guilty, but the PEOPLE'S TEMPLE always reminds me of the GRATEFUL DEAD. Of course, depending on who you are that could be taken as an insult... but it isn't meant to be. There is just the loose, but competent musical feel I get from this music that immediately makes the DEAD spring to mind. The vocals are a nice contrast sounding a bit more urgent and slightly aggressive. It sounds good, but it doesn't quite catch me. (CK)
(HoZac)

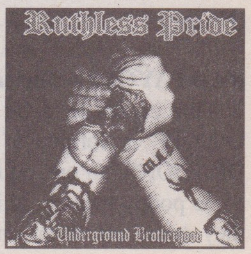
POOKIE AND THE POODLEZ – "The Last Thing I Did As A Teenager" 12"

I didn't have high hopes for this one. The sleeve is super lo–fi and sort of not done all that well. I think the name is also kind of lame. But wait a second, Rubber Vomit Records? Isn't that the same label that put out the first SNEAKY PINKS 7"? I believe it is. And then I listen to the first track and it's super lo-fi melodic punk rock. Me like. And the first track ends with the words "I can't wait." Is this a clever reference to the SNEAKY PINKS record? Jesus Christ, this thing is as catchy as all hell. This is what keeps me coming back over and over again to punk rock. It's melodic and lo-fi and stripped down and garagey and awesome. 500 copies. (KK)
(Rubber Vomit)

POW! – "Hi-Tech Boom" LP

Super sick synth-punk for dark hearted nostalgists who are ready for a new future; I have read about this band in the local alt-weekly but never seen 'em play. Clearly my loss, though I've heard rumors they aren't as compelling as this record is in a live setting. This isn't just a throwback to watching say, PINK SECTION and the UNITS at the Mab. POW! address current concerns of a San Francisco underground existence, in case you don't know from reading endless links on social media websites / *Newsweek*, that would be the unrelenting techdrone yuppie invasion and the resulting and devastating total alienation and savage rancor. The





lyrics paint distorted little snippets of beauty, inanity and dissonance over a wired, synth-strewn landscape, warm oscillating sounds, snippy guitars and the dislocated rumble of drums... The perfect soundtrack for walking along at night through empty streets, desolate abandoned skyscrapers, somewhere between SUICIDE and LOS MICROWAVES with a sly sense of humor and song construction to die for... (LG)
(Castle Face)

PREDATOR – "The Complete Earth" LP
This is a hard one to describe. PREDATOR hails from Atlanta and plays a brand of punk/hardcore that musically sounds like early WIRE with vocals on the bratty/sassy side of things. There are a few mid tempo songs with the title track "The Complete Earth" being the slowest, and the rest are your average uhh you know, punk speed. Lyrical content ranges from social anxieties to getting high, to perhaps the first anti skateboarding song. The irony is that "Skate Slime" is the fastest and easily most skateable song on the record. Maybe that's PREDATOR's way of sticking it to the skaters? There are a few samples on the record, I think I counted three, they don't help out much but whatever. This record is definitely worth checking out. (KC)
(Scavenger of Death / State Laughter)

RADAR EYES – "Positive Feedback/ Morning Glory"
I was trying to ferret it out for a second, but I think I finally got it. RADAR EYES sound like the first two songs a fuzz garage rock band writes after they all get super into ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN and decide to try their hands at that instead of the ZEROES. The A-side is the more driving punk song, complete with some hot lixxx (a fucking guitar solo). The Dracula backing vocals are pretty crucial too. Side B has some atmospheric synths and some chorus effect on the bass. Fuckin' going for it. Add minor key arpeggios and sad crooning, and well, there you have it folks. I'm sick to death of this stuff but this has a pretty good flavor, not standing out from the crowd but if you love ECHO AND THE B.M., put your trench coat on and walk across a glacier to grab this little record. Or order it on the internet. Whatever. (LP)
(HoZac)

RAD PAYOFF – "Breakfast" EP
This comes as a bit of a mystery. RAD PAYOFF is former of members of SASS DRAGONS, so one could reasonably expect some poppy tunes on this record. But instead they come off as an emo stoner-rock band. Like if RITES OF SPRING got really high and tried playing everything at half-time. It's extra confusing because everything visually speaks to them being some kind toilet humor themed band. Just reading their song titles from their full length, you'd think they were trying to infuse some humor in their songs: "New Bong Turks", "Enter Santa", "Man Abong Men". I mean, the love affair they have with weed is clear through their music, but everything else is really confusing. Check them out, and maybe you'll understand better than I do. (FS)
(No Breaks)

RAPTUROUS GRIEF – "Partisanos" EP
RAPTUROUS GRIEF is from Atlanta, GA but they sound like they could be from South America someplace. Even after I listened to their first 7" a year or so ago I couldn't for the life of me place where they were from, which is a good thing. They play a blown out, raw, sloppy hardcore that borders on grindcore with most of the lyrics sung in Spanish. I love the energy rawness of their tracks. I liked RAPTUROUS GRIEF's first release from a year ago and this one continues their blown-out rage. The band has changed slightly since their self-titled 7". They have slowed the pace down in their songs, are a little less thrashy and the guitars and bass blown way out with distortion on this new EP. Good stuff. (MH)
(Carroñero de la Muerte Discos Sod)

RED MONKEY – "How We Learned to Live Like the Bomb" LP
My enrollment in the Kill Rock Stars "Mail Order Freaks" singles club made me gay, alright? And Red Monkey pulled me straight down into the Slampt Underground where I remained for several years and my brain has not been the same ever since. Riot Grrrl nearly missed me, but RED MONKEY got that sorted. This is queer punk programming, people. If you play it backwards, it will make you kill your parents. This material spread across several singles circa 1998 to 2001 was dangerous enough in bits and pieces, but now it is being released in its entirety—remastered, even!—as some sort of plot to take other unsuspecting teenagers down a wretched path of punk depravity. Listen long enough and you will crack the code: "Space Travel vs. Home", and "(Ain't Nothing But A) Incendiary Device," what does it even mean? The dancey, angular rhythms and shrill, disjointed chants are actually spells. "Teenagers are Boring?" Reverse psychology straight from the homosexual agenda. If you missed the bus the first time, the funky gibbon is here to pick you back up so you can burn in hell with the rest of us. (FF)
(Our Voltage)

RIPCORD – "Fast 'N Furious-The Complete Demos" CD
I have to admit, I've always considered RIPCORD to be the least of the early Brit-core bands, being neither musically extreme enough nor good enough songwriters to stand up to the likes of HERESY, NAPALM DEATH or DOOM, and this collection doesn't do much to change that feeling. The two '85 demos are crummy as fuck, barely worth listening to, though the extensive liner notes let us know that the first demo has a shitty clean guitar tone because all the guitarist's gear was stolen the week of the recording, and the second one sucks because the inexperienced guitar player had to cover the bass parts as well. Interesting context-setting info, but it's really more a catalog of excuses than a valuable document of quality hardcore. The '86 demos are better (and it's fun to hear the pre-and-post-take chat) but it's all just so damned inessential. If there's a RIPCORD completest out there in the world this is obviously mandatory, but to everyone else: look, this label just reissued the CHAOS UK/ENT split LP, the STUPIDS *Peruvian Vacation* recordings and the first two CONCRETE SOX records. Any one of those is a better purchase as far as I'm concerned. That being said, Boss Tuneage gave this release their usual swanky treatment, reproducing all the demo covers and inserts and including extensive anecdotes from the band as well. RIPCORD fans: have at it. (AU)
(Boss Tuneage)

RUBELLA BALLET – "Planet Punk" CD
I've been really weary of new material from old anarcho bands, even as someone who borders on being a RUBELLA BALLET completist. Along with LOST CHEREES and HAGAR THE WOMB, they paved the way for mid-tempo female fronted political punk. As for this record, I have to say I feel like I'm being trolled. Deep down I hear the band that I grew up idolizing with their catchy song structure and vocal delivery but it is bogged down with terrible songwriting that just misses the mark. One song, which is almost ironic tumblr brand conspiracy theory that would blow CHRISTINE NOTMYREALNAME out of the water, is basically a nu metal song about the "Killuminati." Also, all their songs have sound clips of various politicians. I know all of us punks have to leave earth at sometime, but I know for sure my destination is not *Planet Punk*. (AP)
(Overground)

RUINED FORTUNE – LP
I thought I knew what this would sound like when I saw it, and while there are glim-

mers of what I expected, what you would expect from a collaboration between a member of CIRCLE PIT and a member of BED WETTIN' BAD BOYS, they take tiny fragments of those glimmers and bury them in cuts and repetition. Like shattering a mirror, tossing a piece here and there, reassembling everything so it's almost identifiable but jarring. The CURE is playing, CHROME is recording. It's like they knew what they had, kept enough to stay this side of total obliteration and threw every wrench within reach. There're guitars and bass and drums and bored, slightly off vocals, but then they drag in along with keyboards, tape loops, chunks of metal, a fucking rainstick (maybe?). In recording they worked with the guy from CURED PINK piling noise and chaos onto songs that at the core seem straightforward. This is not angry or heavy, there's no violence, just dreams and patterns. (MM)
(HoZac)

RUTHLESS PRIDE – "Underground Brotherhood" CD

French trio hate society. Get lots of tattoos. Cover GG ALLIN. Play decent mid-tempo Oi!/hardcore type stuff, with a growly vocalist. Sing in English with lyrics about not giving a fuck, and hating society. I've certainly heard a lot worse. Though, funnily enough, not typically from France. (RK)
(self-released)

SCAPHE – "The Boats/Zamboni Driver"

SCAPHE hail from Minneapolis, MN and have a unique sound. The band is just two bass players and a drummer. "I (ME)" has a repetitive bass riff and slight noise rock feel, but remains some sort of bastard punk. When the bass plays a nice catchy melodic sound I got into the groove of the track. They ride this looping bass while the other bass player plays pretty, clean bass sounds and the track slowly fades and almost degenerates into a psychedelic jam. "The Boats" is a wonderful 25-second powerviolence attack. "Zamboni Driver" is slow simple bass and military sounding drums that eventually has a psychedelic bass join in. (MH)
(Insides Music Lesson)

SCAREDYCAT – "Run" CD

It's hard to tell if these guys are stoners or just plain crazy. It's probably a combination of both. This CD has twelve songs and not a single one clocks in over a minute long. Their love for SPAZZ is obvious, but they only try the powerviolence thing about half the time. The other half is just these bizarre punk songs that end before they even begin. They even play a song that could be described as "hard rock". If you thought Slap A Ham wasn't goofy enough and used too many intro samples…check these guys out! (FS)
(self-released)

DIE SCHACHT – "Halber Selbstbetrug" EP

Man fuck this is real great. I was listening to the first JOY DIVISION EP last week, I don't know how these people do it, but the guitar is all overblown and nerdy jagged like that EP. Like not the goth later shit, but the straight up DIY punk killer shit you want everything to sound like. Deadpan nerd vox make me think of URINALS. I don't name drop shit like that every day, and I don't generally give a fuck about Siltbreeze, so that's, uhhhh, something? B-Side is minimal German turd wave. Er, "Timely." But I won't be flipping this one over again anytime soon. (GB)
(Siltbreeze)

SEA OF SHIT – 10"

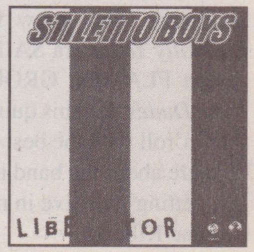
I've been waiting to hear this 10" for a while, as a lot of people told me they loved it, and I would as well. It's an odd thought to come into a review with. The music is great sounding, bass heavy fastcore / powerviolence. SEA OF SHIT hails from Chicago, IL and does a nice powerviolence / fastcore sound with slight grindcore leanings. I like the music and songs. Songs beginning and ending with feedback. A small handful of sludgy slow parts thrown in. But I can't get past the main vocalists. Sorry dude. Yelled, understandable vocals with no dynamics, causing almost every song to sound the same. The drummer does a few gruff / growl vocals once in a while and just the change of pace made me like those tracks more. (MH)
(Diseased Audio)

SECTION URBANE – "The Final Program" EP

Another piece of the rumored 540 Records Shake/Savage Box Set. I wonder if that will ever happen. This is the 1983 third release by Aussies née JUST URBAIN, they kinda stretch out and have a sense of humor and shit. If you want the punk stuff prolly stick with JUST URBAIN, but this is tite, getting all goth and shit. I think I like the last song the greatest, it's fuckin minimal dirge central, I wish I could hear 20 minutes of this shit, but I might get brain damage. Then you turn it over and it's all punk as fuck again. Jeebus. Also check the follow-up KICKS *Leather Godzilla* cassette 7" reissue also reviewed this month because I will not sell you my OG plaid tape. (GB)
(540)

THE SHAME – "The Plan" CD

There's a soccer ball and a pint reading "Tulsa old school" on the cover, and three shorthairs in a bar on the back. So it wasn't shocking to hear bar anthems and working folks' odes on this fifteen-song disc. About half the tracks are fine for the genre—rough-edged, moving at a good clip, and with the sing-along chorus. The songwriting chops aren't there for fifteen songs, especially the slower numbers. No lyrics are provided, but you can tell what he's saying. Recorded in 2011, it was released in 2012, and I guess is just coming in now. I think this may be of interest to those who drink and sing along with the band in person. At best I'd say it's on the better side of average. (JM)
(Zodiac Killer)



THE SHIPWRECKS – "Here On the South Shore We Treat Friends Mo Bettah" CD

Some pretty middle of the road surfer ska punk by the SHIPWRECKS from Long Beach, NY. This reminds me of the early zeros when every skater punk I knew was into ska punk. The genre (and it revival period) had its moments, but after a certain point there's only so much you can take before it starts to sort of blend together into one amorphous chorus of post-SUBLIME worshippers. These guys sound like they are heavily into SUBLIME—and surfing and beer. They've got a trumpet, alto and tenor sax backing up the funky bass lines and punk drumming, with gang vocals galore and lots of classic ska guitar breakdowns followed by punk speed breakthroughs. There are moments when everything turns funky and jazzy, and the singer sure does like to show off his vocal range, but the mildly thrashier moments, that would have given this some grit and appeal, were lost in amongst the "esoteric" surfer / ska / punkrockery. If you love this genre you could check it out, but it's nothing you haven't heard before. (LA)
(More Beer Party)

S.H.I.T. – "Collective Unconscious" EP

Stomping out of Toronto, S.H.I.T. take pogo, D-beat and hardcore to a new level of blended perfection. I mean, the demo tape held its own against constant new releases for two whole years, and this record is a perfect way to follow up those unforgettable tracks. S.H.I.T. has a very distinct sound. Ryan's reverb-soaked, snarling vocals, Jose's simple, but concise, hits and the downstrums from the guitars make this band somehow stick out and give them a specific sound. The strong presence this band exudes is climaxed at a live show, and they are not to be missed if that opportunity arises. Luckily for us West Coasters, we'll be seeing them on tour this summer! This record is mandatory, and includes the sickest art from Jaybo. Essential release. (KR)
(Iron Lung)

SONIC NEGROES – "Pucker Up" CD

Not sure what the Nordic obsession (at least, in terms of monikers) with Negroes is all about, but here's another rocking outfit with Negro in their name, from the frozen north (Swedes, in this case, so far as I can ascertain), who know how to rock. More *Eternally Yours* era SAINTS, or *Shake Some Action* FLAMIN' GROOVIES than *Apocalypse Dudes*, but this quintet can crank out the rock'n'roll with the best of 'em, for sure. Still not sure about the band name, but maybe I'm just getting sensitive in my dotage. (RK)
(Zodiac Killer)

SPEEDOZER – "Super Charger" CD

Well, this doesn't really sound like SUPERCHARGER at all—though its definitely some punk rawk'n'roll. At times SPEEDOZER reminds me of the faster moments of the DEVIL DOGS and the SUPERSUCKERS. Definitely some big ZEKE and DWARVES vibes going on as well—especially with some of the lyrics. This is for people who miss the gunk punk of NEW BOMB TURKS and GAUNT so much that they don't really care about bands breaking new ground, as much as break neck speed. This record is fast as fuck, that's for sure. Super heavy duty Estrus and eMpTy throwback type shit right here—with a sloppy kiss of Gearhead. Whiskey drinkin', speed snortin', bar fightin', country drivin', burn cruisin' fast as fuck punk. Do you have as many BLACK OAK ARKANSAS records as BLACK FLAG records in your collection? Do you think that if AC/DC would just fucking play faster that they'd be one of the sickest punk bands ever? If so, this album is perfect for you. Listening to this makes me feel like I live in Southern Illinois again. Seriously, I'm having an Evan Williams blackout flashback right now... (FU)
(Zodiac Killer)

THE SPIES – "The Battle of Bosworth Terrace" LP

The story of this record is almost too good to be believed. The songs were recorded in 1979 on stolen equipment, in an environment that sounds like a scene out of *Withnail and I*. The police initially confiscated the reel-to-reel tape when the band were arrested for the stolen gear, but it was returned and languished for over 20 years. This Wellington, New Zealand collective provided members to both SHOES THIS HIGH and the PUDDLES. Quirky, experimental and loose, there are elusive shards of perfect pop amongst the nodding explorations found here. Imagine an even less tethered TELEVISION PERSONALITIES or SWELL MAPS. A worthwhile artifact. (AM)
(Siltbreeze)

SPIKE PENETRATOR – "Yeah! Yeah!... Baby!" LP

Savage Young Spike! Syracuse's favorite goon finally sees his teenage bedroom demos released to a hungry mass of punk nerd shut-ins! The shit collected here is from '72, kiddies, meaning it's the product of Spike scoring a lid and laying down some witty teenage boneheadisms is his bedroom, post-*Playboy* pumpin'! What's evident from the jump is that Mr. Penetrator had already pulled off a few lightning-in-a-bottle homegrown stunners prior to "Rock'n'Roll Face." The influences are called out plainly be the man himself: spoonfuls of LOU REED, dashes of ZAPPA and the traditional girl-group and bubblegum pop all stew together in a toilet and become proto-punk gold. This is actually a whole hell of a lot better than it has any real right to be. You can definitely see this as a logical precursor to the PENETRATORS, but it manages to succeed on its own, closer to something the GIZMOS or MIKE REP woulda shat out in the same approximate time period. Do it to it! (MC)
(Feral Kid)

STILETTO BOYS – "Liberator" CD

These guys have been around for a while now. I even dug up an old review by Lance Hahn in my history search. They used to be a little more raw, but now they have a pure pop thing going on. This sounds like 20/20, the RASPBERRIES, and even NADA SURF a bit. This grew on me as there are some pretty strong, slick tunes on this. A little surprised to see this on the normally more raucous Zodiac Killer Records but a definite keeper! (RL)
(Zodiac Killer)

SUBURBAN MOMS – "Turning Schools Into Stones" EP

When I saw this band is from Ventura I braced for the Nardcore worship but these jokers are doing a cool and weird take on punk rock that I like a bit more. Their style is unorthodox but sounds kind of like early UK punk with some of their riffs and the repetitive, spitting vocal cadence but there is a sludgy rock'n'roll undertone that adds a bit of fun to the mix. It would sound great blasting out of a minivan. (BL)
(Planet Bullshit)

SUBURBAN MUTILATION – "The Opera Ain't Over Till the Fat Lady Sings!" CD

This seminal artifact originally dropped three decades ago (oof!), but there's no time like the present to make up for lost time. A screaming example of the shit the Midwest was cranking out, this record should sit alongside other Great Lakes and Rust Belt acts (and yeah, I'm talking about the heavyweights), simultaneously tinny and bombastic, with disjointed guitars piercing through the entire recording. Everything about the record puts you on edge, lyrics are visceral but juvenile in a manner I think we can all understand, capturing the frustration of being a weirdo, and former *MRR* alum Rev. Nørb has arguably not sounded this fierce since—adolescent irreverence and vitriol holding down

the fort until his adult wit could fully take hold. While I largely view the CD format as a disposable one, Beer City did this one right by adding 30 demo tracks taken from three different recordings and extensive history/ notes from Rev. Nørb. The extras are raw as shit, and "Psychoanalyze Me" (particularly the version from the *Jamie Simon's Dad's Machine Shed* session in 1983 is as close to perfect as I've heard in a long time), "I Reject U" and "Daddy Was a Nazi" benefit from the pure power of a blown out demo. But these are just the extras, ad the focus is on the seventeen song full length... a classic record that perhaps you didn't know you needed until now. (WN)
(Beer City)

SYSTEM FUCKER – "System Fucker" LP

On a scale from one to "what the fuck?!", this LP is a definite "holy shit!" This isn't your Daddy's SYSTEM FUCKER, and yesterday's youthful crusty hardcore kids have matured and evolved into the metallic Japanese hardcore machine represented on this album. Seriously, this is not at all the full-length you would have predicted if you'd only been exposed to their EP and D-CLONE split before this (though the EXTINCT GOVERNMENT-inspired (?) cover art may have been a tip-off as to the new direction). Rather than noisy HC, SYSTEM FUCKER has decided to reach for the brass ring of technical JHC à la DEATH SIDE and while they're not nearly as successful as the legends at pulling off the style, they're not half bad at it either. There are a couple of sadly unmemorable tracks on here, but those are definitely outweighed by the songs that are highlighted by a catchy riff or a strong vocal or an incredible bass freakout or, at their best, all of the above. Fans of earlier SYSTEM FUCKER material need not apply, but if you're into Burning Spirits style hardcore played tough and ambitious you'd be well served to check out this album (AU)
(Distort Reality)

TERMINUS – "Going Nowhere Fast" CD

Boss Tuneage has re-released a CD version of this once vinyl-only 1990 debut LP by UK punkers, TERMINUS. I never got into this band the first time around and it's gonna be a hard sell to win me over now, but this is still some fairly solid late '80s / early '90s punk / hardcore with some elements of peace-punk and vague hair-metal guitar wankery (not too odd, considering the era). A lion's share of the lyrics seem to stem from that leftover paranoia of Reagan / Thatcher-era politics that had everyone (justifiably) thinking that we would all be consumed by a nuclear bomb at any moment. Like, why the fuck do you worry about spiking your hair or dancing at the club when you could die in a bomb blast tomorrow? It's a bummer to be sure, but also true. There are some seriously solid, catchy punk songs on here, but as a whole album, it doesn't really grab me by the throat. It's very much a product of its time, which is fine, but I'm going to try and keep moving forward without them. (GH)
(Boss Tuneage)

TRIN TRAN – "Far Reaches" 12"

Six songs from the label-described "One Man Synth-Tar Drum Band," which sounds pretty cool on its own. Fortunately, the music does too. Retro-futuristic sounds delivered rather aggressively. Is this Wisconsinite singing with a German accent? I guess if you're going to play this type of music you probably want to. The 12" is one-sided with the other side painted with a symmetrical design. So it looks nice too. (CK)
(Castle Face)

VÅNNA INGET – "Ingen Botten" 12"

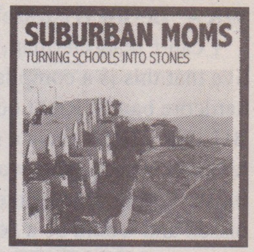
Amazing 12" from Swedish melodic punkers VÅNNA INGET. Everything about this album rules. It's recorded exceptionally well, the riffs are catchy as fuck and the vocalist is one of the best power pop wailers I've heard. The chemistry between the keys and guitars/ bass is flawless. The reverb drenched shoegazey guitar chords are dreamy and the post-punk bass riffs make the whole package dynamic and very well-rounded. The album balances the heavier songs and the slow-jams and each song has a unique and memorable vibe. I am sure they are monumental live and it's sweet they are still a DIY band despite winning a Swedish Grammy! (WTF?) (DV)
(Man in Decline)

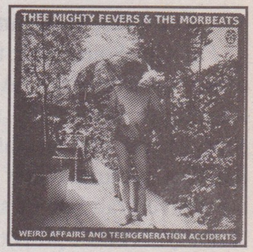
WATERGLASS – LP

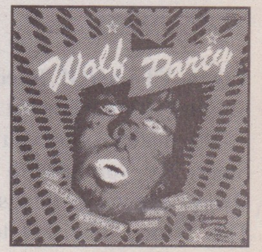
WATERGLASS play a brand of modern music heavily influenced by the yesterdays of mid-western American emo. Unfortunately falling prey to the predictable clichés the genre has spawned, this safe and massively popular style has pretty much been nailed on this LP. The band mixes hardcore riffs with softly sung lyrics, melodic choruses with galloping drums and employ dramatic momentum shifts at will to round out their sound. Had this band been from suburban LA instead of Santiago, Chile, I'm pretty sure they'd be signed to Bridge 9 by now and be the coolest thing from The Mall of America to The South Coast Shopping Plaza. If curious, no need to investigate, you've heard this before. (RM)
(Amendment)

WATERY LOVE – "Decorative Feeding" LP

WATERY LOVE sounds like a slow-burn bad mood… like walking down the street and just randomly punching people without showing any emotion… like the heat getting shut off on the coldest day of the winter and just shrugging your shoulders rather than taking any action because you're so used to being let down by the world that you'd rather just shiver on the couch than talk to your fucking landlord for more than five fucking seconds. The guitars are rudimentary, shambolic, raw and almost lost in feedback at times. The drums are barely holding on. The singer sounds like he's never had a good day in his life. There's no hook that drags you into one particular song, but the whole record demands your attention. It's slow downer jams for not giving a fuck. And it's good. (GH)
(In the Red)







V/A – "Berlin Tristesse" EP

I can't read German, but I'm fairly positive that this is a compilation of Berlin punk/hardcore bands. Right out of the gate, it kills. BITTER CROP plays a straightforward mid-tempo punk song that was over before I could finish typing that sentence. Their song is pissed and would be a perfect fit on any punk mixtape. MÜLLTÜTE blasts through their style of completely perfect, totally fucking pissed hardcore that it catchy as fuck. I love them. NUCLEAR CULT almost approaches grind speeds, but then settles into a slow stoner-style breakdown that ends before you can light up that first toke. EARTH CRUST DISPLACEMENT has a bit of a noisy Japanese hardcore/crust vibe. PEACEBASTARD plays straight up raging hardcore with a singer going so full throttle that they're sure to have some throat problems later in life. PIG// CONTROL rages the shit out of some blazing "no fucking control" German hardcore. CRACK UNDER PRESSURE is blast-beat mania and reminds me a little bit of SPAZZ if they didn't have a sense of humor. This comp is a perfect snapshot of the Berlin hardcore scene right now and flies by in a matter of minutes, which is wonderful for people like me who feel like hardcore should always be short, fast and loud as fuck. (GH)
(Heart First)

V/A – "Punks, Skins and Psychos" CD

Finally! Something that serves all three of my main interests. A 29-song sampler of sounds for bedwetters and bottle smashers everywhere; this is classic "not my thing" territory but grab this if you are gung ho for a massive grab bag of street punk, Oi!, psychobilly, NYHC, power pop, prime Confederacy of Scum core, *Beach Blvd* wannabes, bar rock, TURBONEGRO clone bands, and the DWARVES. Maybe this is something the label put together to send out for free with mailorders or something? I can't imagine someone getting pleasure from listening to such an insanely schizophrenic grab bag of genres and bands. Lots of groups from small towns and scenes, and with band names like the FISHNET STALKERS, STILETTO BOYS, the HILLBILLY HUXTERS, HATED NOISE, I think you know what you're in for. Seems like a bit of a sausage party. (LG)
(Zodiac Killer)

V/A – "TAANG! Records: The First 10 Singles" 10xEP box set

No matter how you feel about Record Store Day, you have to admit that there are always a few cool things amidst the releases. This is one. The first ten singles from the formerly Boston-based punk label TAANG! Records which were released between 1984 and 1988 packaged in a box that opens up to reveal a collage of black and white photos of the bands. Included are GANG GREEN *Sold Out/Terrorize* (interestingly missing the "Taang Dub"), LAST RIGHTS *Chunks/ So Ends Our Night*, STRANGLEHOLD *Same All Over/ She's Not Leaving*, LAST STAND/ NOONDAY UNDERGROUND split, NEGATIVE FX *V.F.W.* EP, GANG GREEN *Skate to Hell/Alcohol*, the OYSTERS *Mine Caroline/Tell Me*, LEMONHEADS *Laughing All The Way to the Cleaners* EP, MOVING TARGETS *Less Than Gravity* EP and SLAPSHOT *Same Mistake/Might Makes Right*. What I like about hearing all these records at once is that the '80s Boston punk scene can hopefully now be remembered as the variety of punk styles I remember it was, not just a bunch of Neanderthal hardcore tough guys most outsiders have come to think it was. The artwork for each sleeve has been updated. I would have personally preferred the OYSTERS' original cover and would have liked the original label artwork too. It just captures the time better. Also discerning readers will note this is the first time the NEGATIVE FX record appears as a 7". It was originally planned to be released as a 7", but grew into TAANG!'s first LP. There is a booklet with label founder Curtis Casella's recollections on the label's founding and each of the releases. He may not be the most poetic person with tidbits like "But we fucked it up Boston style" and he contradicts himself by saying that both GANG GREEN's 7" and LAST RIGHTS' 7" were the reason he started the label. However, more importantly, you do get the idea that he did it simply because he loved the music and the scene and felt a need to document it. I am happy he did. Also included is a CD of all the songs on the 7"s which in this day of download codes seems quaintly retro. Something like this might give you a reason to get up early and endure waiting in line with the clueless records flippers. It is really cool. They did an excellent job putting it together. (CK)
(Get On Down)

V/A – "You Pose But Why?" flexi

A green flexi chock fulla crazy noise-core/garbage disposal vocal havin' bands namely: SETE STAR SEPT, SHITNOISE BASTARDS, EXCERBACION and the OILY MENACE. Costa Rican band EXACERBACION'S four songs are a total mess and indecipherable from each other. SETE STAR SEPT while chaotic, at least are making something out of their spastic noise-core/semi-grind. That is, you can at least pick out things from 'em. SHITNOISE BASTARDS—make harsh, ear-killing grind à la the days of the *Bllleeeeaaauuurrrrgghhh!* comps. Whereas, the OILY MENACE have a nice and loud production and make a jackhammer assault of grind à la *F.E.T.O.*-era NAPALM DEATH or E.N.T. with samples about gardening as a political idea. A mixed bag but it has some good moments. (JD)
(To Live A Lie)

V/A– "Without Kibou There is Nothing Volume Two" EP

Nice mix of current-era UK hardcore and punk that shows a load of diversity in sound. DIS-WAR's "Culture War" is a complete arse-kicker of anarcho-punk with buzzing guitar and direct vocals. ALBION—sounds like a bassy, straight forward mid-paced HC version CRASS (must be the accent that reminds me of 'em). The DOMESTICS make a blend of burly Oi! with a hint of grind and it blazes by quick. DIJON MUSTARD throws down a neat mix of REALLY RED and the WIPERS in their tune about "Saladin". Huzzah for "history-nerd punk"! SOCIAL RUT—makes some pretty damn good grind/power-violence with a very '89-'91 guitar tone. On the flip we get AUTOPSY BOYS' wild industrial-synth punk which is just genius! SCIENCE MADE US ROBOTS' song is a super-catchy UK anthemic punk like a…er, political, street punk LEATHERFACE? OVERLOADED have a dirty crust sound with some metallic chunk in their riffing. SECOND IN LINE do a tribute to one of my fave actors, John Candy in a catchy update of JIM CARROLL BAND'S "People Who Died" and even mentions "Macho Man" Savage. On that note, I'm gonna say this comp will make you wanna say "Oh yeaaaaaah!" (JD)
(Kibou)

V/A – "Wolf Party: New Zealand Werewolf Sounds From Stink Magnetic" CD

The subtitle reads "Perfect for your next werewolf party." Next? Ha ha. A collection of '00s New Zealand bands embracing the Voodoo Rhythm aesthetic of lo-fi surf and garage rock with an emphasis on classic horror films and Mexican wrestling. There are some fun songs from the likes of BAD EVIL, VOODOO SAVAGE AND HIS SAVAGES, TAPE MAN, the DON KINGS, SLIM CHANTS, FULL FUCKING MOON and others. It has just the right amount of weird to keep it interesting throughout. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm)

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Beer City: PO Box 1759, Milwaukee, WI 53201-1759, beercity.com
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Blondes Must Die: blondesmustdierecords.com
Boss Tuneage: PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK, bosstuneage.com
Brown Plaid: brownplaid.bandcamp.com
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Wee Rock: PO Box 333, Springfield, MO 65801, weerockrecords.com
Wooaaargh: wooaaargh.com
Zodiac Killer: zodiackillerrecords.com

DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Please note, anything other than vinyl or CD will be reviewed in this section. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Amelia An.Ok, Matt Badenhop, Robert Collins, Greg Harvester, and Ari Perezdiez.

BABE QUEST – If you take the women from RAG RAGE, SNARLAS and B ARTHUR and then trap them in a harsh Minneapolis winter for a little too long, you'll get BABE QUEST. Fuck, this is really good. Every song has a hook. Some of it reminds me of a lost RUNAWAYS demo, in that mid-tempo, full-rock, full-throated kind of way. Tales of heartbreak and lonely nights blanketed in raging, tuneful punk songs. If this is what harsh winters do to punk bands, I want them to keep suffering in the cold. I love this. (Greg) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, Babequest.bandcamp.com, 3332 17th Ave S., Minneapolis, MN 55407)

BLACK KASPAR – *Schizo Tech* – A collaborative noise/experimental project featuring five folks. I hear drums, guitars, bass, horns, and some electronics. Probably a lot more fun to make than it is to listen to. (Matt) (3-song cassette, no lyrics, adeptrecordings.com/blackkaspar/schizotech)

THE BLUES – Oh fuck. Guitars treading through some sort of noise-fuck-skronk-shred territory are joined by a forlorn fucking saxophone as they battle your eardrums for attention against the rest of the world. No drums. No vocals. Parts of it sound like the financial district of San Francisco during rush hour. Cacophonous. Play this on a boom box on a crowded subway car and someone will probably beat you up. So, yeah, I like it. (Greg) (9-song cassette, no lyrics… or vocals, no contact info given or found)

BODDICKER – *False Flag* – Final release (?) by this blistering grind band from California, brought to you by Ritual Knife. A whole new level of metallic in the guitar tone and an utterly scathing vocal attack make this stand out among most grind/PV that I hear. (Matt) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, ritualknife@gmail.com, boddicker13@gmail.com)

BUTTERSCOTCH STANLEY – *Getting Our Bering Strait* – This band sounds a shit-ton like HOT NEW MEXICANS… and if that's too vague of a reference for you, HOT NEW MEXCIANS were often referred to as a "more punk WILCO." Clean guitars, clearly sung vocals… more of a pop sensibility than a punk one. Lots of nods to '90s era indie-rock and the Merge Records catalog. Even though they have a name that you can't say to any of your friends with a straight face, they're still better than a lot of the dreck that gets passed off as indie-punk these days. (Greg) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, butterscotchstanley.bandcamp.com)

THE CHAIN – This Olympia outfit comes out the gate with some fast but cold punk, but the speed doesn't last too long before it drops to a quarter of the speed. There's actually a very '90s emo vibe lingering throughout this tape, but I wanna be careful not to totally write it off as some genera-band. The CHAIN seem to be playing whatever they want, whenever they want, and the result is a pretty dark, emotive, and interesting sound—but if you like '90s emo it will definitely help. (Matt) (5-song cassette, no lyrics, $5 ppd, Stay Punk Tapes, PO Box 22302, Oakland CA 94623, staypunktapes.blogspot.com)

DAMN BROADS – Who would have thought that in 2014 there would still be bands that played straightforward hardcore/street punk with ska breakdowns? Here we are. Looking past that, it's nice to hear a hardcore band that is tough as fuck and plainly lays out a protest against skeezy dudes in the scene. Simple. To the point. (Greg) (3-song CD-R, no lyrics, damnbroads@gmail.com)

DJ MR. THE BEST – *New Again* – This was recorded at the Funbooth in Asheville, North Carolina. I've watched a lot of punks recently get into synthesizers and other electronics. I just wanted to let you know, after listening to this DJ MR. BEST cassette that you will never be as good as DJ MR. THE BEST. Trust me—I'm an expert. I sat next to Larry Tee once and he invented electroclash—I even have his business card somewhere! Sorry—just kidding, who cares what Kathleen Hanna did after BIKINI KILL anyway. But I digress. If you are starting to dip your toe into the world of electronic music after your exposure to the SISTERS' use of Doktor Avalanche and this inspired the shit out of you—I highly recommend you take some cues from DJ MR. THE BEST's fat beats. Take some E and just feel new again. Maybe give the obscure SPORTS a listen or better yet DIG SHOVEL DIG. (Amelia) (9-song cassette, no lyrics, myspace/djmrthebest)

DREAMBOAT – From Montreal comes DREAMBOAT, who play scrappy, sloppy queer pop-punk that sounds influenced by everything from SNUGGLE to DRUNKEN BOAT to early SUPERCHUNK. There's something very '90s feeling about the presentation, from the typewritten song titles to the explanations of the lyrics, but I am 100% okay with that. A couple of the songs fall a little flat but that's probably because the other songs are so fucking catchy and melodic that the weaker songs have a harder time holding up. Solid demo and I'm looking forward to what this band has planned for the future. Members of HARI LEGS and SISSYFIST. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, 5281 Rue St Marie, Montreal, QC, H4C 1X8. dreamboatpunx@gmail.com)

EEL – *Winter Tour Tape* – This is from their recent Buffalo, Boston, NYC and Philly winter tour courtesy of Mind Cure Records. This needs to be played loud or else one cannot hear it. There is an intense pogo spirit pervading this tape from the bass to the drums. The guitar is spectacular during its solos but gets lost in the chaos most of the time. The knobs that get turned on this recording are as erratic as the emotions fueling the vocals. If you like your punk with a side of chaos and a side of pogo, then EEL is your main dish. This tape has EEL making sounds that conjure memories of DISCHARGE via DISCLOSE via OUTO via DISORDER via ZOUO pervading this recording or maybe my hearing is just going- either way, another Punk hit. (Amelia) (16-song cassette, no lyrics included, Mind Cure Records, mindcurerecords.com)

ELECTRIC WEREWOLF – *Gloryroad* – Catchy snotty garage punk with horror movie keyboards, like NEW BOMB TURKS trying to write simple driving punk songs and adding a campy '60s organ. It's weird, and I don't need it in my life every day, but it works. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, charv667@yahoo.com)

ELECTRIC WEREWOLF II – *Behold The Darkness* – I mean, you can kinda read the review above, since it's mostly the same shit, but these tracks are a little more punk, and the horror vibe makes 'em come off more T.S.O.L. than garage this time around. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, charv667@yahoo.com)

GG LOHAN – *Judgment Free Zone/Abuse is the Only Way* – GG LOHAN is vile and in your face similar to GG ALLIN but in her own way. It's up to you whether you want to venture further or run away. I'll leave you with this, "no rubbers, no masters." (Amelia) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, Sluts from Philadelphia, 1400 S 23rd Street Philadelphia, PA 19146, facebook.com/scumgods, gglohan.bandcamp.com)

GENERALISSIMO – Things I like about this: a few of the guitar lines (especially the East Bay Ray sounding ones,) cool grey/red striped flag layout. Things I don't like: the thin vocal quality, the lyrics are all written as one massive run-on sentence, the rest of the guitar lines, the similarities to '90s grunge/alternative rock. I guess this is the "digital + analog value pack," which means I get a tape and baby CD-R with the same material minus one track. It looks really nice, I wanna like it, but I don't. (Matt) (6-song cassette + 5-song mini CD-R, lyrics included, generalissimo.mu)

HALDOL – Distant and dark without really sounding intentional, HALDOL nail a sound that is reminiscent but not at all redundant. Guitars are flirting with both '80s Midwest HC (I'm talking HÜSKER DÜ, EFFIGIES) and discordant goth punk, and the overall production is ultra raw and hollow. But the songs are catchy and anxious—CRIMINAL CODE for a musical reference (though HALDOL don't really *swing* like that)—and the vocals are full of yearning and sound far far away. This is a demo recording put together by two dudes… I am hoping for evolution, because this is an excellent

starting point. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, welcometochernobyl@yahoo.com)

I SHOT REAGAN – At first listen, I SHOT REAGAN sound like that anonymous band that you happened to see playing first on the big ass stage opening for the band that you actually planned to see but you didn't show up late enough and had to sit through the openers but… shit man, these dudes are pretty good. But listen more, and there's more here—Southern California sound(ing) fronted by strong, pointed vocals and beefy guitars that bash out rock'n'roll riffs with a hardcore intensity. Drums are snappy and sound like that rock band mentioned in the earlier scenario, but it suits the overall slickness and "cool" the band puts off. They don't always win (the riff and accompanying solo that close "Sweet Isolation" is a total bummer), but when they just bash it out (as on "Parcels of Posterity") the shit is pretty hard to fukk with. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, no contact info)

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTIES – Apparently, this is (was?) a one-day project put together over two people's love for the ANGRY SAMOANS, which is kind of surprising coming from members of AMPERE and FOREIGN OBJECTS, but I guess is the kind of shit you do when you live in a recording studio. Good catchy, sloppy punk in the vein of *Inside My Brain*-era SAMOANS. Better than most sloppy punk that gets mailed into this rag. The whole things lasts about three minutes. (Greg) (2-song cassette, no lyrics, highledgestapes.bigcartel.com)

LIMBS BIN – *Total Anguish* – More pain from this ultra prolific one man freak show, LIMBS BIN take erratic bursts of grind and translate them to the electronic medium, drum machine and power electronics combine to create a force that easily surpasses much of the subgenre from which they take their cues. Not unlike Chicago's BLOODY MINDED, LIMBS BIN are reinterpreting (reinventing?) grind, and the fresh vision is a welcome one. The note that came with this disc says there is a tour in the works with bleak black metal band SANGRE Y TIERRA and a stand up comic… suffice to say this would be a package worth seeing. (Robert) (32-song CD-R, no lyrics, J. Landes, 577 Onderdonk Ave. Apt. 2L, Ridgewood, NY 11385, limbsbin.bandcamp.com)

LONGINGS – I love that feeling of putting on a demo and knowing you'll like it as soon as you hear the first note. LONGINGS consist of members who know exactly what the fuck they're doing and have put out a boatload of quality music. They play anthemic, energetic post-punk that sounds dark and brooding, yet uplifting and chaotic all at the same time. You know, that kind of shit that sounds easy to pull off but then sounds so bad when you do it wrong… I'm not even sure how to accurately write about this kind of music anymore, but I know when I hear music that will definitely be on a year-end top-ten list. Do you know what I mean? Male/female vocals. Energizing, memorable guitar hooks. Solid rhythm section. I can't recommend this highly enough. (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, twerprecords.storeenvy.com)

L.O.T.I.O.N. – *Leaders of Tomorrow Ingest Only Noise* – This tape is a modern commentary on digital life while simultaneously taking you hostage at the punk rave from your nightmares similar to WHITEHOUSE. The majority of us have become digitalized and trapped within our machines—going places for the sole purpose of putting photos on Instagram or existing within a community on Tumblr. We now function in a real life version of Plato's *Allegory of the Cave* and sadly it's by our own volition. Through this choice to exist through social media and depend on machines, we have chosen to let the government monitor our every move as we willingly succumb to being surveilled and publicly record our thoughts. Here is L.O.T.I.O.N.'s "Welcome to the Civilized World" lyrics reminiscent of 1984, but spewing todays real horrors, "pacify the youth [distract their minds with electronic toys]/monitor the species: stomp on the head of a thinking person/desensitize the children [numb their minds to displays of violence]/glorify the vapid, destroy the soul of the thinking person." Yes, our nightmares can be put into words, digitalized and regurgitated with '80s arcade beat formation mixed with feedback mixed with the hysteria of the cacophony of the overstimulation we suffer daily. Since this review doesn't make much sense let me give you a concrete comparison: like a modern version of G.I.S.M.'s *Military Affairs Neurotic* sometimes mainlining speed but other times bordering on the brilliant simplicity of a broken record player. I'll leave you with a L.O.T.I.O.N. question: Does the FBI own or currently use drones and if so, for what purpose? Correct answer: Yes and for surveillance. (Amelia) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, Rock'n'roll Heroes, IRRH. storenvy.com, alexanderheir@gmail.com)

LOW TAX – *II* – Neanderthal hardcore, drawing equally from SSD and NEGATIVE APPROACH but more raw and bombastic than either. The final track harnesses a few '80s HC hooks, but the rest of this thing is just plain ugly. That time when someone asks you what a band sounds like and all you can say is: *"I don't know man, these fools are fukkn pissed."* Yeah, it sounds like that. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, crippledsoundrecords@gmail.com)

LUNCH – LUNCH is from Portland and plays post-punk influenced garage and indie-rock. They seem like the kind of band that would get offended that I just called them indie-rock. They have an anxious energy that keeps them from falling too far into the post-punk camp and they have hooks to spare in each song. Just like with their EP, they cover GUN CLUB's *Sex Beat*, which will give you more info about where they're coming from. (Greg) (10-song cassette, no lyrics, getresurrected.com)

MANFISH – *Shit and Confusion* – An '80s ska-esque swagger starts this disc from Helsinki's MANFISH, who boast three guitars and songwriting sensibilities far more advanced than their placement in the demo section might imply (dear dudes: a CD-R is still a demo—*MRR* rules are god, period). A garage punk incarnation of a band who sound like CTIZEN FISH (just the punk, not the ska *[even though earlier I said they were ska-esque, I know]*) and RANCID in a blender with later Biafra on vocals, but oddly slower than any of those three things I just mentioned. And then they sound like some country rockers on "Drunky Business?" Shit man, I don't even know anymore… but then, the whole thing is titled *Shit & Confusion*, so there you go. (Robert) (10-song CD-R, no lyrics, bandmanfish@gmail.com)

MIGUEL / VOLCÁN split –VOLCÁN is vicious "garbage can banging" punk with their very primal sound. They make a brief appearance in the beginning of this tape as an eruption of seething Scandi-laden intensity with political punk attitude. The unselfconscious, wailing and spastic guitar ends in literal explosions followed by MIGUEL's gentle, simple 1-2-1-2 bubble gum folk punk infused with the electronic beats. This tape is beautiful like a well-done collage. Be it with art, a show, a compilation or a split tape like this—not everything has to have the same aesthetic, but the quality must stay the same. The quality and strength of these bands gives this combination its ability to work. After our little vacation with MIGUEL, the tape goes back to a harsher, more aggressive sound that is like a Spanish version of a KURO mixed NI NO NI NADA and would be perfect on a line up with BLAZING EYE. This leads on to the second side and all I can feel is the yearning to hear more. The desperate vocals begged to be listened to as the singer is having a nervous breakdown and the band plays on with simple, rhythmic punk with that beautiful Scandi guitar. This continues on into a loop of the unexpected that keeps one flipping this tape for days. (Amelia) (?-song cassette, lyrics included, Alta Intensidaz Tapes, altaintensidaz.com, teodorohdzz@gmail.com, €3, Teodoro Hernandez, C, J. Carlos I, 14, 1D, 26580 Arnedo, La Rioja, SPAIN)

NARCISISTER – Three women from Connecticut making a very compelling racket. Raw and distorted bass driven punk with a hardcore edge. A variety of tempos and attacks keep this from coming off contrived or calculated in any way. Some pogoing, some dirging, and even somewhat melodic vocal hooks. My only gripe is that the levels jump around from song to song. This band is cool! (Matt) (7-song CD-R, no lyrics, narcisister.bandcamp.com)

NEVER HUMAN – Extra reverbed with a sound similar to KRÖMOSOM and PISSHEADS. The vocals are super menacing through the thick haze of reverb and crasher crust sound reigns supreme here. The drums are strong and the feedback is glorious. Get deaf to this tape! (Amelia) (7-song cassette, Ben, rawdistort@gmail.com, 2684 Agricola Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 4C9, Canada)

NUCLEAR AGE – More NEGATIVE APPROACH than SADO NATION, this DC band barges through three songs in about five minutes. What a tease. Good, but not leaving a lasting impression. (Matt) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, $5 ppd, 716 Monroe St . NE, Apt. 433, Washington DC 20017)

THE PALE FLOWERS – Garage-influenced punk that sounds like it could have been released on an unknown indie label in 1986. Parts of this honestly remind me of XTC and WALL OF VOODOO if they had listened to more REPLACEMENTS. How is that possible? Anyway, there're some seriously good jams on here but nothing that feels too truly lasting. I'm forgetting each song as soon as it's over. Maybe I'm just an asshole. Sounds like a good soundtrack to an '80s movie party scene. (Greg) (10-song CD-R, no lyrics, thepaleflowers.bandcamp.com)

PALEFACE DESTROYERS – A cacophonous drum and synth/electronic duo from Ohio, PALEFACE DESTROYERS call it quits a few rungs below "over the top," which is unfortunate if only because I want the to be more of a mindfuck than they are.

Their sound is out there, but controlled—short bursts of tortured screamo/industrial that are *almost* totally incredible. "You Knock On Art for Luck" and the low-end dirge "Do You Even Try" are the standout tracks for my ears... bonus points for legitimately sounding like nothing I have heard before. (Robert) (11-song CD-R, no lyrics, palefacedestroyers.bandcamp.com)

PIG DNA – *Livenotlivefucker* – With a band like PIG DNA you either get it or you don't, but word on the street is that those who know, well they know. I haven't been impressed by a band like this in a really long time—whether recorded or live. I'm impressed because they don't sound like other bands in Oakland, or other bands in general, but they sound like what is needed for this dismal modern era in Punk. PIG DNA just get as weird as they want within a warm womb of oozing noise and harsh abrasive feedback. This tape is from a live recording on KBOO in Portland from November of 2013. The recording is very poor quality but does not diminish the listening intensity of their direct spewing of indecipherable noise drone. I love the "equalizing stortfuck by DM Kawakamunist" shout out on the back of the tape, real classy. They would be good on a line up with EEL. PIG DNA is the only way. (Amelia) (7-song cassette, no lyrics, understanddischarge@gmail.com, $4, 855 34th Street, Apartment B, Oakland, CA 94608, geocities.jp/deathhumans)

RAGANA – *Unbecoming* – The Pacific Northwest has a penchant for the tender brutal. It's full of sweet and dangerous punks who make the most sincere forms of aggressive music. To me, Portland/Oakland duo RAGANA is part of that cadre. This demo is a literal ritual, lyrics are chanted over delicate riffs while drums pound along. Traditional doom with a raw punk edge, exploring darkness and invoking intentions of power and rebirth. The songs can go from quiet to a powerful wall of sound. For fans of ANON REMORA, NEGATIVE QUEEN and CULL. (Ari) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, ragana@riseup.net)

REVOLT PLAN 8 – The note that came with this demo smells like it was written by someone wearing a lot of cologne, which isn't punk... but it gave me a headache, which is punk. REVOLT PLAN 8 is from small-town South Carolina and they throw out a 15-song CD-R which feels like it's inspired equally by small-town frustrations, early basic punk shit, shitty dead-end jobs, *Goo*-era SONIC YOUTH and maybe even NIRVANA in a distant way. Mix that all up into a blender, throw some reverb and samples in and you've got REVOLT PLAN 8. Weak spot: The vocals sound really separate from the rest of the band and a little uninspired. Otherwise, not bad. (Greg) (15-song CD-R, no lyrics, revoltplan8sc.bandcamp.com)

SOME UNCOORDINATED BASTARDS – *Drive Slow* – With a suggestion that bands who insist on including a promo letter with their CD-R demo that's gonna be reviewed by some dirtbag shitworker pay a little more attention to making that promo letter cohesive and comprehensible, I will quote directly from SOME UNCOORDNIATED BASTARDS: "*... the sound really came together, and has been described as having overtones of East Bay punk, ska, and hardcore to somewhat of a pop-punk wound with 'more punk and less pop*.'" Weird though, because even though that sentence makes no sense whatsoever and is a challenge to simply read, it's kinda how I feel about the band. So... good job? (Robert) (8-song CD-R, no lyrics, bjonesbass@yahoo.com)

SUSPECT – Burly ass straightforward hardcore punk that reminds my of OUT COLD—probably doesn't really *sound* like that, it's just their approach and delivery has the same energy. Rapid fire, no frills, and essentially simple in every way, but this band is fierce, and there's a reason that this method is tried and true. Skip your trends kids, hardcore punk is god. (Robert) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, nick@paranoidfutures666@gmail.com)

SYNDROME 81 – Self-described as "French Oi!" in their letter, Brest's SYNDROME 81 exceeds my expectations with much more than imitation. Yes, the first track could easily fit among a *Chaos En France* lineup, but then comes a total ripper! Still Oi! flavored, but fast—obscure reference would be the faster NANA BONNARD song. Dark guitar leads weave through the next couple tracks to give this demo even more variety, and finally a NEGATIVE APPROACH song fed through the French Oi! filter. Fuck! Vocals are sung in French and are catchy as hell, guitars sound warm and full, and this is just a fucking great tape! Recommended. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, syndrome81.bandcamp.com)

TIMES BEACH – *Raw Pop* – I actually ordered this through the mail before I even listened to it because I knew I'd love it. TIMES BEACH plays raw, reverb-covered pop that comes more from a background of punk than anything else... like maybe if PAVEMENT wasn't fucking lazy. There're some elements of shoegaze and downer pop, but this is waaay more anxious and fun than any of that shit. They have a busy-as-fuck, melodic bass player who does a good job of reining in the wall of guitars and the drummer is tight as fuck. Every song on here is really "going for it". Recommended. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics included. distorteverything@gmail.com)

TWISTED – Jangly and driving female fronted punk from South Wales. Really good melodies in the instrumentation and some cool back-up vocal parts that really add to the originality. Sometimes I'm reminded of RITES OF SPRING's more upbeat songs, and overall I'm reminded of ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT if their singer did more talk-singing. It's even better on the second listen, which is a good sign. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, £1.10 UK, £2 Europe, £2.50 rest of world, twistedpunx.bandcamp.com)

UZI RASH – *The Garbageman's Uniform* – This is a posthumous cassette-only release of the final album by Oakland weirdos, UZI RASH. I was never a close follower of the band during their time on Earth, but I respected that they seemed to put a whole lot of time and effort into their countless releases over the years. The specific sound of UZI RASH is one that's difficult to pin down, but always interesting. Is it possible to combine the sounds of DANIEL JOHNSTON, post-punk, art-rock, noise, rock'n'roll, JAD FAIR and AM radio without sounding like an asshole? Yeah. UZI RASH did it. Get this or don't. UZI RASH probably won't care either way, but your life would be better with this in your tape deck. (Greg) (8-song cassette, no lyrics included, Smartbrainsrecords.blogspot.com)

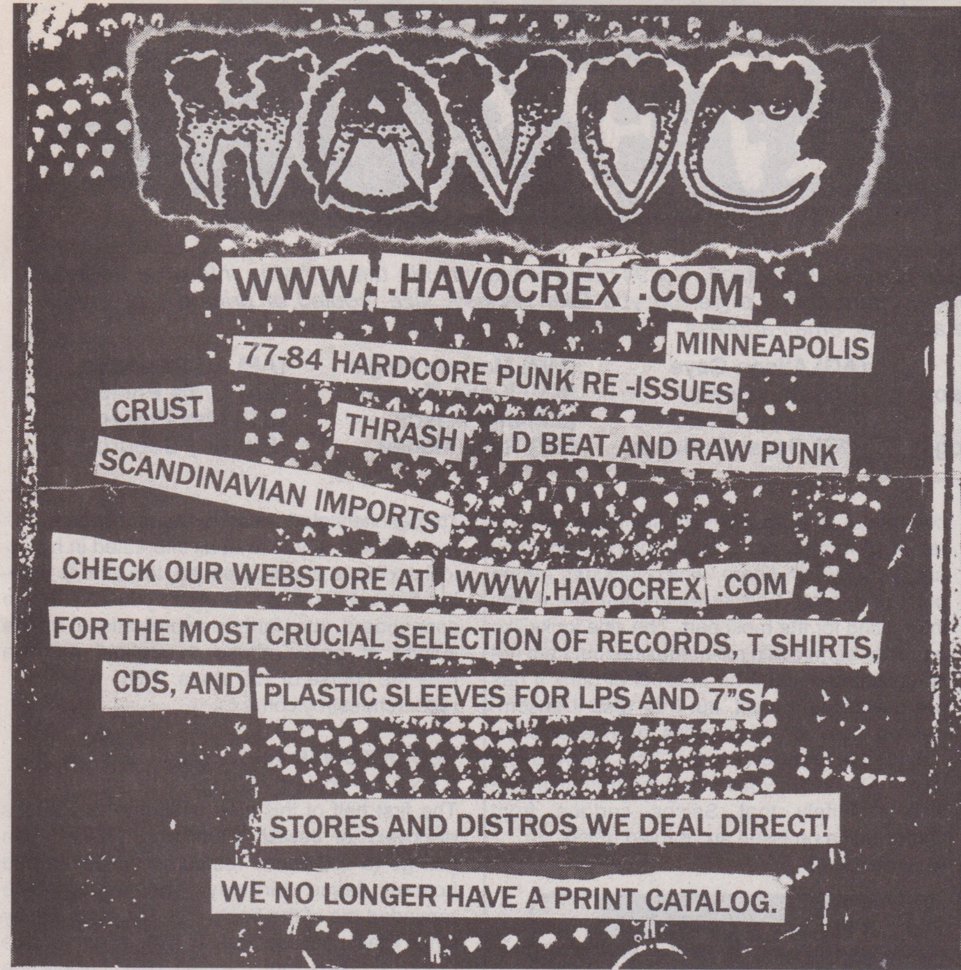
V/A – *Comp of Narf II* – This is another in the series of comps from the insanely prolific label, Fag Tapes. I don't think this one flows as well as *Vol. III*, but it's still a great compilation. Bands like PUBLIC URINATION, ROACHCLIP, FUTURE and CYGNUS bring you noise, drone, punk, pop and rap over the course of 60 minutes. Most of this is culled from practice tapes, live recordings and demos. As always, it's a tiny pressing, so act fast if you want one. (Greg) (?-song cassette, ten bands, no lyrics, fagtapes@hotmail.com)

V/A – *Comp Of Narf III* – Impressively, this is the 361st release from Fag Tapes, out of Detroit. Volume III of this compilation is truly all over the map, while still mostly focusing on the music scene in Detroit. It compiles live recordings, practice tapes and demo tracks from sounds as varied as K-9 SNIFFLES, BODY/HEAD, THE BIBS, QUILT BOY and more. Rather than separating each band from one another, I just let the sounds wash over me as a whole and was impressed with how well the comp flows along. The musical styles range from noise to experimental, to surfy/garage to FLIPPER-style dirges to rock to things in between. A wonderful compilation all around, but extremely limited. Get one now. (Greg) (?-song cassette, nine bands, no lyrics, fagtapes@hotmail.com)

V/A – *Punk in the Streets Volume 1* – This is a compilation of (I'm assuming) mostly small-town punk bands from the US who fall into hardcore/street punk/pogo-punk category. Some standout tracks for me are the WHEELZ, DAMN BROADS and EMEUTE OI. None of the bands are re-inventing the wheel, exactly, but it's still a good comp geared towards suburban punks and people who are looking for something outside of the Warped Tour world, perhaps. My complaint is that there's no band info at all with the release. None. Where are they from? Who are they? How do I get in touch with them? Instead, there's a sticker. (Greg) (15-song CD-R, no lyrics, viciousmistressrecords.com)

VIOLENCE CREEPS – These new Bay Area shitz have been creeping around at slimy venues around town for a bit now. They play slower, deliberate, plodding, simple-yet-effective punk. Like, maybe if FLIPPER had done a lot less drugs, played more in tune, were more pissed and fronted by a woman. Think about that and you will reach the tip of the iceberg that is VIOLENCE CREEPS. Cool shit. A+. (Greg) (8-song cassette, no lyrics, facebook.com/vcreeps, smartbrainsrecords.blogspot.com)

WET DRAG – *Silhouette Yeah* – The three components of WET DRAG come from different off-shoots of the punk community, ranging from harsh noise to dreamy pop to wacko punk. When these three get together as one band, you can hear these three divergent styles melding to work alongside each other rather than fighting each other for space. The sounds that WET DRAG emits are jarring, interesting and engaging. I like that the vocals seem to carry the songs while the drums hold it down and the guitars shred into their own stratospheres. Oh yeah, you'll probably wanna know that it's members of UZI RASH, STILLSUIT and GRASS WIDOW, but you shouldn't get it because of that. You should get it because it's great. (Greg) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, wetdrag.bandcamp.com, smartbrainsrecords.blogspot.com)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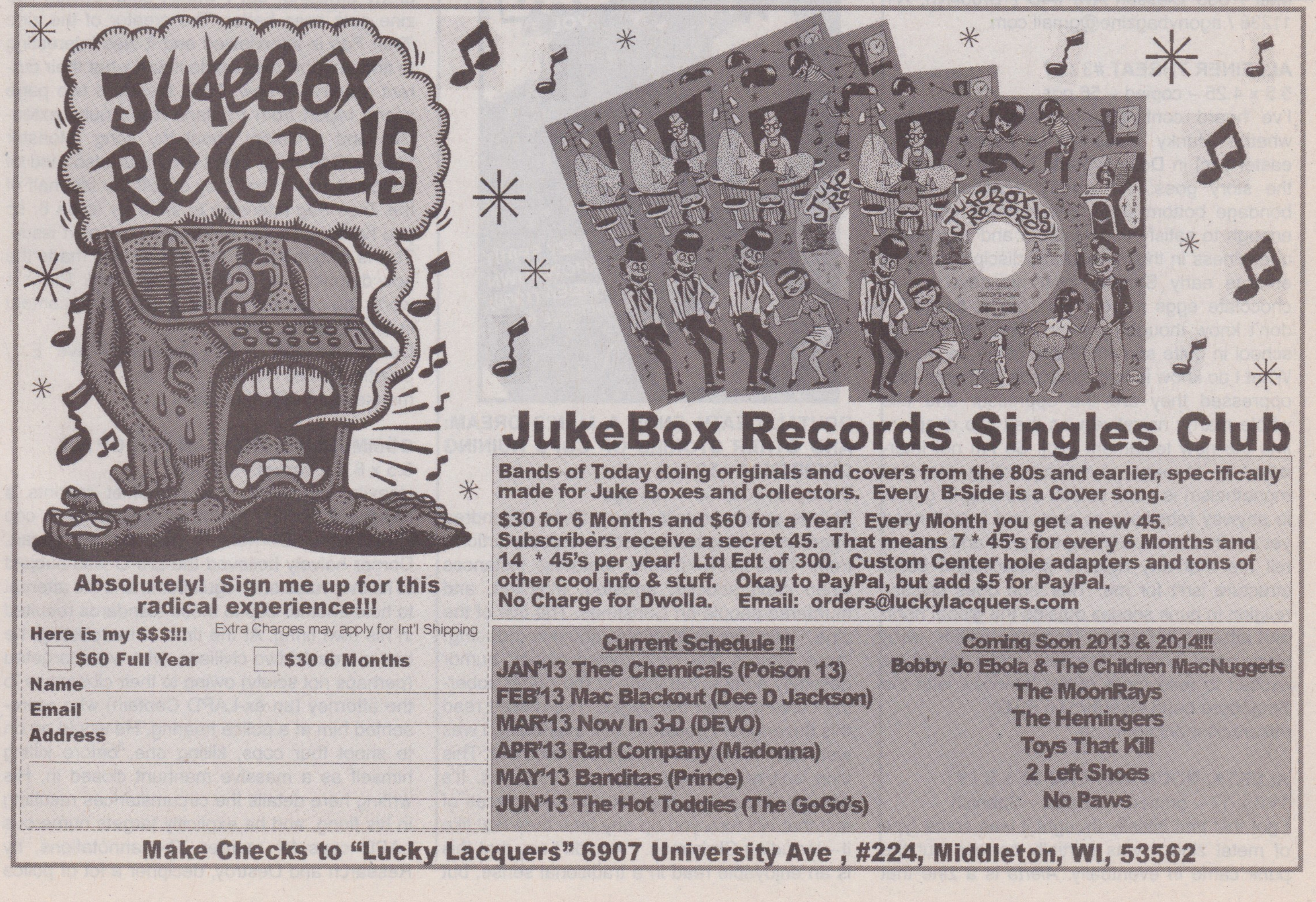
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AGONY BAG Vol. 2 / $4 ppd
8.5 x 11 – printed – 20 pgs
A reprint, reissue reviews, interviews with a current and a long-gone band, and a bit of recent band photography makes up this second volume. The editor talks with Crazy Spirit, which is informative and entertaining enough, and also Showcase Showdown. His love of the band comes through, and the interview comes off well. Reprinted from the Dec. '90 *MRR* is an interview with Poison Idea. They talk a lot of shit, but some of the comments on the history of rock'n'roll and Pig's take on competitive drinking are worthwhile. Three recent Australian reissues get a semi-lengthy examination. Maybe worth four bucks if you're stoked on the Showdown and Crazy Spirit. (JM)
Matt / 653 Classon Ave #4B / Brooklyn, NY 11238 / agonybagzine@gmail.com

ALLEINER THREAT #3 / $?
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 56 pgs
I've heard conflicting opinions lately about whether Hunky Jesus will be happening this easter [sic] in Dolores Park, but isn't that how the story goes: the scruffy, scrawny, heavy bondage bottom stays underground just long enough to satisfy the doubters and sew some uneasiness in those dogmatic disciples only to emerge early Sunday from his cave to lay chocolate eggs in your little pastel basket? I don't know though, I haven't been to Sunday school in quite sometime and could be wrong. What I do know is that christians [sic] aren't the oppressed they are the oppressor and this whole martyr narrative was tired two chapters into the new testament [sic]. So I'm not interested in teenage christians telling me that monotheism is punk or that believing in god is in anyway rebellious or cool, and I don't need yet another zine weighing the pros and cons to tell me that any rigid or prepackaged belief structure isn't for me. This zine does discuss religion in punk scenes outside the global north and atheism in Eastern Germany, which I wish were more primary focuses, and I would be excited to read more of the interview with the Singapore band Overthrown. (AG)
mikareckinnen@gmx.de

ALERTA: ROCK EN PERU #5 & 6 / $?
11.5 x 17 – printed – 42 pgs – Spanish
I got this and initially thought it was some type of metal zine. I was partially correct, but the punk came in eventually. *Alerta* is a zine that comes out of Peru. It's very similar to *MRR* in terms of format, but it encompasses anything under the "rock" genre, which includes all the punk and metal. Format was clean! And it was interesting for the most part. The zine looks like a mainstream rock'n'roll magazine, but I am not complaining much. The pockets of punk it has are basically on point, but I do wish it encompassed more of it. Also, props to whoever is formatting the interviews in this zine, you're doing it well. Oh, and my favorite thing from this zine was definitely that Saicos cartoon from Carloslavida on issue six, it ruled. (OG)
www.alerta.pe

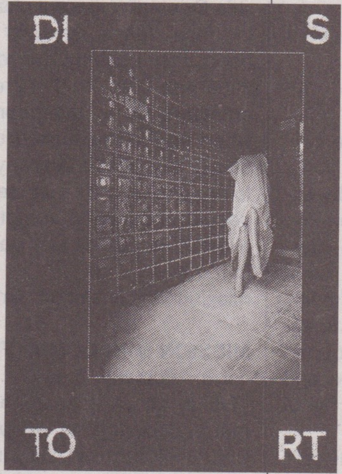
BRUTAL DEATH ENDS A MAN'S DREAM: AND OTHER STORIES OF COPS RUINING CHRISTMAS / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 124 pgs
This is police brutality porn. Over a hundred pages of nothing but copied newspaper articles from 1845-2008—mostly featuring instances when cops abused, arrested, attacked, and murdered people on Christmas. The title of the zine, with its immediate chuckle-inducing, "aww, shucks, the cops ruined dinner" humor definitely adds some irony to the rather sobering content within the pages. The more I read this the angrier I became until, eventually, I was just really overwhelmed and bummed out. This zine isn't really about cops on Christmas. It's actually about how cops are fucking pieces of shit that will fuck you up any time they feel like it—including Christmas. I wouldn't say that this is an enjoyable read in a traditional sense, but I'm definitely glad I read it—as emotionally taxing as it was. If you're at all interested in historical accounts of police abuse, this zine is nothing but great primary sources you can use to springboard into further examinations of the culture of police abuse throughout America over the course of 150 years. (FU)
researchdestroy.com

CLOCK TOWER #5 / $2 ppd, trades OK
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 22 pgs
The first half of this zine is about the author's discovery of Jewish Christmas. That's when you go to a Chinese restaurant on Xmas and boycott Jesus' birthday. The writing style reminded me of the book *Free Pizza for Life* by Chris Clavin but with less spelling errors. It was pretty amusing, but I wasn't sold. Luckily the zine gets even better. The creator of the zine *Teen Fag* is interviewed and it was interesting to find out how they made it and what their current process is now. Then there's a two page scene report from Portland that's quite extensive and a history about the song "Monster Mash". One thing that I love (but also kind of annoyed me) is that they cut off the last half of the *Teen Fag* interview to save for issue 6, so you have no choice but to read the next issue. This is also made by the person who made the now defunct zine, *7-11*. Overall, *Clock Tower* is worth the cost and I'd like to see more content in future issues. (VX)
Danny Noonan / 321 Broadway Ave E. / Seattle, WA 98102 / monkeypunks@yahoo.com

COMMUNIQUE FROM AN EX-COP / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
Heavily annotated, this pamphlet reprints a Facebook posting by former Los Angeles cop Christopher Dorner. A patriotic American, Dorner naively believed the LAPD was subject to its own rules and regulations, and his attempt to hold another cop to these standards resulted in his own firing. At the time of the posting, he had murdered two civilians, who were targeted (perhaps not solely) owing to their closeness to the attorney (an ex-LAPD Captain) who represented him at a police hearing. He would go on to shoot four cops, killing one, before killing himself as a massive manhunt closed in. His writing here details the circumstances resulting in his firing, and he explicitly targets numerous LAPD cops for murder. The annotations, by Research and Destroy, decipher a lot of police

abbreviations, exhume previous scandals and bullshit Dorner references (along with some of Dorner's own bullshit), and examine the media narrative which developed. For students of police behavior, the unusual thing here is that a cop turned lethal violence against other cops. But in its specific focus on the LAPD and Dorner's case, this is an excellent resource. (JM)
www.researchdestroy.com

CRETINS OF DISTORTION #3 – $5
8.5 x 11 – copied – 56 pgs
"If you are in a punk band that doesn't want to be weird you shouldn't be a punk and you shouldn't be in a punk band." The Midwest is seriously crushing it right now! This is a great regional zine ("This zine *only covers Midwest punk...*") with the kind of blatant localism I can 100% get behind. Tons of great photos of bands, shit talking all the right things (poseurs, punk being kinda popular again, uptight tryna be cool hardcore bands...), great reviews of bands that haven't even recorded anything yet. Also reviews of bands that have put stuff out. Not just their records (even though there are some great record/tape reviews), but just reviews of bands in general. *Why don't more people do that?!* There's also a great article about Doc Dorbin Dart (aka 26) from the Crucifucks to give a little history lesson of Midwest weirdo punk pride. Emmy is a great writer and the energy jumps off the page like it's trying to wrestle you into the basement slime of a gross punk house. The letter that came with this (scrawled on the back of yet another great *Columbus Sucks Because You Suck* DIY show calendar) says that each issue comes with a sticker and a 2.25" badge (Emmy! You're from Ohio, not England—it ain't a badge! It's a button, or a pin!). It also came with a cool double-sided pull out poster. Now I've got Tenement on my wall. (Oh, Amos! *Swoon.*) This zine is fucking great. Totally worth every dollar. Just like with *Kill Your Parent's Garden* (from Wonder Lake, IL), I only wish I knew about this zine (and more about these scenes) before I moved away from Carbondale, IL last year. Only one thing sucked—Failed Mutation is from Milwaukee, not Minneapolis. *If you're gonna goon, goon right!* Besides that, everything about this zine is perfect. For people who would rather be Roger Klotz than Roger Miret! Buy this, or don't—Emmy and the Midwest punks couldn't care less either way. They're not doing it for you. (FU)
Emmy Ramone / 2623 Neil Ave. / Columbus, OH 43202 / notnormal.bigcartel.com



DISTORT #43 / $3 US
8.5 x 11 – copied – 14 pgs
I've insinuated it before, but I'll flat out say it now: I have a total zine crush on *Distort*. It's not only the content selections that keep me musing, it's not just the quality of the writing that keeps my expectations high for other publications (and equally so for my own output), but more so the quality of *thoughts* behind these expressions. One can learn to write *interestingly*, but it's not so easy to train yourself to actually *be interesting*. And Daniel is. He's also, I guess, a bit of a loner, and I suspect he won't give a wombat's arse what I think of his zine, as I suspect he does it more for himself than anyone else. That said, I can't remember a time I didn't enjoy a *Distort* installment and this one does not disappoint either, so thank you. Not many people can discuss power electronics and hardcore (Puce Mary, Prolife, Lakes), recreational drug banter (Gutter Gods/Dribble), complimentary realities and the role of psychology in writing (writing being an indulgence of "obsessions inside the realm of imagination." —S.T. Lore), and drop names like Schopenhauer, Lester Bangs and Dostoyevsky and still be earnest, readable, informative and actually enlightening—then again *Distort* has never been your usual punk and hardcore zine and thank hell for that! Also, there are no reviews in this issue, but there are also conversations with Lucy Cliché, Vanessa Amara, and two well-written interviews with Sydney punks Oily Boys and Low Life by Max Easton (props for not following the usual Q&A style). If you like the secluded, shadowy corners of punk, where weirdo literati recreate reality with their words and noise, pick this up. Here's to the tactful few. (LA)
Daniel Stewart / PO Box 239 / North Carlton / VIC 3054 / Australia

EQUALIZING DISTORT Vol. 14 #1 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs
To be honest, this zine confused me at first—it seemed like a normal enough punk music zine, but as I read it I realized the entire zine is pretty much just one (very) long interview with the band Creative Zero. Eventually I figured out that *Equalizing Distort* is actually a pretty fucking rad radio show based out of Toronto, Ontario (sup Canada?) and this zine is an extension of that show. Pretty cool! Definitely pick it up if you're from Toronto or the GTA and tune into that radio show—they play some pretty sick tunes. (SF)
equalizingxdistort.blogspot.com/

THE FIKA DIARIES / $6
5.5 x 7.5 – printed – 36 pgs
Fiona makes quiet black and white comics about her travels in Sweden. Illustrated are scenes of transportation and moving about in a foreign land. The stories are simple and often lack a lot of dialogue. It's got a really pretty lavender and gold silkscreened cover. Very nice nice nice nice nice. (EC)
fiona.avacado@gmail.com

THE FLAGBURNER #15 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Maybe it was the cute cartoon self portraits on the front and back cover, or the clean layout of this zine that made me want to like it, but I just couldn't do it. The book report style retelling of *Homage To Catalonia* doesn't really say anything new (but I guess it would save you some time if you didn't feel like reading it yourself) and the piece on the films of the third Reich didn't take any interesting turns or even compare German films of the '30s to other movies created as propaganda, such as modern mainstream Hollywood movies. I could go on but my criticism of these elementary research papers makes me feel uncomfortably like a mean teacher grading this kid poorly. The interview with Porco Dio is good but maybe slightly outdated at this point, and maybe you'll enjoy the recipe for breaded tofu towards the end. I guess I'd give this a C (needs improvement.) (AG)
Janne Nystrom / Eurantie 12A9 00550 / Helsinki / Finland

GAD! #3+4 / free, trades OK, stamps or donations appreciated
8.5 x 11 – copied – 22/41 pgs
A very punk looking zine from Alabama, covering local hardcore, punk, grind, rock'n'roll, and underground (sub)culture. The writers of this zine are super open to submissions, which is cool, and are obviously active within their local scene(s), which they are pretty excited about, while still trying to encourage discourse and critical thinking (like with the opinion piece on Crowdfunding in #3 or the). These zines contain interviews, record and zine reviews, comics and artwork, poetry, opinion pieces, blurb-style info on (mainly local) bands they are psyched about, a couple ads here and there, and a Mangaka spotlight section (neat!). The aesthetic is cut'n'paste, sharply contrasted black and white with hand-written notes here are there—pretty dark punk. The one thing I found a bit hard to follow was the formatting. All lower caps is faster to write, but much harder to read, and a couple times the text was slightly blow out, making it fuzzy; but I can see how each zine has a goal, and getting punk out there by any means possible or necessary seems to be the goal here—a pretty noble one at that. On to specifics, *Gad!* #3 has interviews with Justify the Scars, Unsane Asylum Records, Halloween Man comic creator Drew Edwards, *Hide and Creep* director Chuck Hartsell, and a live show report from the Blondie/X show at the Nashville Ryman Auditorium. *Gad!* #4 features interviews with Random Conflict, Carridale and actor/director Daniel Emery Taylor (*The Return of Swamp Thing*). If you live in Alabama and don't know any punks, hit these people up! (LA)
PO Box 394 / Gadsden, AL 35902 / gadpunk@gmail.com / facebook.com/punkmail

GAG ME WITH A... #10 / $3 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 38 pgs
I've been reading *Gag Me...* since issue 4 and it's getting really fancy. The aesthetic is top-notch and issue 10 has a giant rolodex of contributors. Issue 10 was a little random in those regards and I would say this is more for the

Etsy crowd, but there is a lot of valuable information about making zines, zine resources, and even interviews with "professional" zinesters in this issue, and a tribute to Lou Reed that's worth checking out. If you're not into typewriter poetry, collages, and hip lingo, I suggest you check out their mini zines. The same people who put out *Gag Me…* also create my favorite mini zines of all time. Their mini-bio series of musicians such as Darby, Ian Curtis, and girl groups of the '60s are the perfect reading material for those with short attention spans and are music obsessed. *Gag Me…* is from Southern California and it's definitely one of the better zines to come out of that area. (VX)
gagmewitha@gmail.com /
mcsunflowerjones@zinesandshit.com

GUIDE TO DATING GANGSTERS Vol. 2 / $4
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
This is some crucial knowledge right here. Dating sucks, especially for punks. It's pretty scary to venture outside our crusty circles for love but with this zine in hand, I can now confidently consider Greasers, Bosses, Cat People, Stoners, Inmates, and Experimental Musicians amongst my prospects and know I can be a fun date. This dating advice zine is full of wonderful tips on how to dress, date ideas, and how to deal with their lifestyle. Some tidbits are obvious (i.e. stoners listen to Dr. Dre) the research is thorough (i.e. stoners listen to Sleep). This dating zine is hilarious, and yes I would find it cute if you offered me a bong with chilled rose water and mint, for reals. (DV)
Julia Vice Versa / viceversapress.com

IN PACE REQUIESCAT / $5
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 16 pgs
Herein lies a queerly re-imagined scene from Edgar Allen Poe's tale *The Cask of Amontillado*, written by Sean T. Collins and deftly illustrated by Julia Gfr?rer. If you are unfamiliar with the tale: Montresor plots revenge on an acquaintance by the name of Fortunato, and lures him into the catacombs with promise of a rare Italian wine. The unsuspecting drunkard ends up chained to a corner and sealed in brick for eternity. Enter Collins' pornographic retelling of the immurement of Fortunato and the unsheathing of Montresor's "rapier." I'll say no more… Wild stuff! Gfr?rer's creepy, tendril-like lines elevate what could be mere fan fiction into a brilliant piece of art. (FF)
thorazos.net

JERK STORE #13 / $3 AUS
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 36 pgs
I really like the way this zine looks, the cream colored paper is a nice touch and makes the typewritten text, shitty show photos and bold black lines look great. I'm really glad this kid is taking this approach as opposed to some computer laid out flash that the content wouldn't carry. Like every time I would almost put this zine down out of boredom I'd think, "at least it looks pretty and somebody took the time to type this up." The 1981 interview was OK and probably interesting if you like peace punk or wear a Zounds back patch. I was bored a lot more than irritated, only really getting pissed at Sam North's asinine and pointless short story about the terrible inconvenience of a law student getting booked by NYPD and being held for almost six hours! The horror! (AG)
PO box 284 / Maylands WA 6931/ Australia / loadedshoebox@gmail.com

MERMADIA BOMB ITALIA #44 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
Pipebomb Comix presents this fun comic about mutant punk mermaids and partying Georgia-style in France and Italy. Chelsea Ray Lea has been putting this out for over ten years and it's still fun and fresh. *Mermaidia Bomb Italia* is full of creative, simple pen drawings and gnarly zombie gore, telling the story of a punk gal trying to have fun in trendy Rome and deal with the effects of a cursed smelly lake and winged kegs from stateside. Totally weird and totally rad. (DV)
Chelsea Lea / 269 N. Jackson St suite #5 / Athens, GA 30601
zinepipebomb@gmail.com

MISSION MINI COMIX: BAD LUCK / free
2.75 x 4.25 – copied – 8 pgs
Alterna-versions of tarot cards, all drawn by different and talented artists. Kinda whatever. The cover is definitely the ten of swords re-interpreted as ten syringes stabbed into what appears to be a corpse. Please people, I'm trying to keep my lunch down. As you might imagine, this appeals to folks who are into tarot and also into making the world what you see and feel. Generally worth looking at, but not full of meaning or anything. (JB)
missionminicomix.com / minicomix@gmail.com

MISSION MINI COMICS: CHUCKY CHEESED UP / $?
2.25 x 2.75 – copied – 8 pgs
San Francisco's in the news every day right now. Tensions are high and perhaps it's a conflict unlike anywhere else in the world. Utopic liberalism butting up against rugged individualism and then of course there're all the really pissed, poor and working people who have to deal with all of that bullshit. Every morning I get off BART at 16th and Mission. In the past four to six months there's been a change. Spurred by a campaign to "clean up the plaza" they have been posting cops (rookie ass motherfuckers too) to mediate the derelict flow and make everything appear safe. Any coincidence that the pigs just shot a kid for sitting in a park and eating a burrito only a few miles away? The Sarah Slocum story got twisted into some neoliberal feminist-capitalist drivel about "violence against women" instead of being understood as the apocalypse portent that it is. Yeah... man, life in the Bay is like really fucked right now. And it's terrifying. Security being the mode that these piece of shit yuppies use to get there way is of particular interest to me because sometimes I see punks use this terminology too. These conversations about safety rarely include safety from overdosing, safety from houselessness, safety from institutionalized state violence and safety from surveillance and all it's punitive qualities, safety from having to listen to some nasty ass motherfucker in toe shoes talk about his developments in North Berkeley all the way to Civic Center. Anyway what does all of this have to do with the newest *MMC*? Well fuck if I know. These guys just draw a bunch of nasty pictures of rats fucking with lots of references to smoking crack, and portals to other dimensions. It's cool. I like it. (EC)
missionminicomix.com / minicomix@gmail.com

MISSION MINI COMIX: DON'T KILL THE WORLD / free
2.75 x 4.25 – copied – 8 pgs
The latest *MMC* is super fucking depressing, as it covers the facts and un-covers the lesser-known realities of the Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant meltdown in 2011. If you aren't on the West Coast, or in Japan, maybe you aren't thinking about it anymore. I know I try not to. It's well drawn and pretty informative, and maybe a little Orientalist since it claims that the "preserving face" (as in, lying to the public) that has been the strategy for dealing with it is a Japanese trait. No, I'm pretty sure that all governments lie to their constituents, especially when something fucked up is happening that affects our health. Anyway, I'd recommend this to anyone, and it's just the type of thing to help people understand something shitty and complicated in a quick and easy to understand format. (JB)
missionminicomix.com / minicomix@gmail.com

MISSION MINI COMIX: FUCK FAME / $?
4 x 6 – copied – 6 pgs
This is about accountability, or lack thereof, mainly focusing on people in popular bands. But I think accountability in general is doled out unevenly, some people become pariahs and some people disappear for a second and then reappear and everyone gets a little bit of the "but he's a nice guy" treatment from friends and idiots (quick note: "but he's a nice guy" is the worst ever, a terrible excuse for shitty behavior, a total piece of bullshit, literally every time I hear it I'm just like, whoever it is, I bet they are actually a fucking turd) and then some people just don't get called out at all. So these are things that need to be pointed out, but this zine is trying to do that in such a shit way. It's a comic book style thing (totally chill) but some of the drawings are like, really? The cover has a drawing of a woman with big boobs dressed "slutty" being like "oh you're in a band? I love you!" The last panel is someone "being held accountable" in which the guy is being tarred and feathered while people are yelling "dance motherfucker dance!" not to mention that there is also a drawing of a woman being raped. Again, really? Is this how we're going to have this conversation? (MM)
missionminicomix.com

MUSIC WE HATE / $3.50
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 30 pgs
This is mainly interviews, a couple of updates from the guy who puts it together. The interviews are with two harsh noise dudes, Jay Howard and Mike Finlea. It's annoying in a way because I know one of these dudes and I think he's a turd, me and my friend gave him a ride home from a show one time in which he spent

the whole time quizzing/belittling our music knowledge, talking about how Whitehouse is the greatest most superior band ever, then made a rape joke and then tried to hug us goodnight. But it's annoying because this zine is really good. The interviews are in depth, the questions are really good. It ranges from the basic normal gear set up/practice/whatever to all this different cultural stuff to theory and influences outside of bands and music and current obsessions. The cover is whatever but other than that it's aesthetically pleasing too. I thought about not mentioning that the one guy is a turd because this zine is really good, but turds give interviews all the time and those interviews might be really interesting. Still a turd. (MM)
pianowires@gmail.com

MY STUPID LIFE / SNAKEPIT split zine / $5
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 50 pgs
A little background: Ben Snakepit has been a drawing an autobiographical three-panel comic strip about his day, every day, *since 2001* called *Snakepit*. It might be one of the best art projects I've ever come across. Mitch Clem used to do a weekly punk webcomic called *Nothing Nice to Say*—think *Life is Posers*, but less East Coast and more Midwest. Mitch also did a bi-monthly autobiographical comic in *Razorcake* called *My Stupid Life* and currently edits the punk comic anthologies *As You Were* and *Turnstile Comix*. Now that we're up to speed, on to the review: This split is great. Following the form of *Snakepit,* both artists draw their days—from the beginning of October til the end of December 2013. I've been following *Snakepit* since the first collected book came out in 2003, and even though he's older and his strips are less about monster-filled keg parties and Adderall fueled tours/benders and more about quiet nights with his wife and working out, the charm and draw of the comic is all the same. While the strips by themselves would be pretty boring, it's in seeing them collected and watching Ben's life play out in front of you that the beauty of the comic unfolds. Reading it is like catching up with an old friend. I honestly hope he never stops doing this comic. The *My Stupid Life* half is no slouch either. It was awesome to see Mitch agree to play by Ben's rules… and get it completely right. His art is definitely stronger and more detailed than it was when he did his three panel styled comic—so seeing him forced to reel it in to a single strip (as opposed to a full page as in *Razorcake*) was great. He uses the tight space *so* well. Unlike Ben's strips, many of Mitch's can hold up by themselves—and his comedic delivery in the strip medium is nothing short of perfect. It gives a completely different feel than Ben's, showing that the formula that they both decided to use can yield very different—yet equally enjoyable—results. This split is fun, funny, and strikingly honest. Can't ask for much more. Also, Mitch's strip for 11/15/13—that's every day of my life. Too real. Get this and put it next to your toilet ASAP. (FU)
bensnakepit.blogspot.com / mitchclem.com

NOT LIKE YOU #1/ $?
7 x 8 – copied – 40 pgs
New Mexico-based zine that covers O.C. so-called "all-star" hardcore band, Done Dying who get a long and kinda dull interview and photos with ex-*MRR* columnist Dan O' Mahony (also from bands like: 411, Speak 714 and No for an Answer). I found the interview with author Tony Rettman (from *Why Be Something That You're Not*) to be much more interesting as it covers his history with punk and music writing and documenting various scenes. Plus, he delves way deeper into NYHC than the "usual suspects" of Cro-Mags and Agnostic Front and mentioned Nausea, No Thanks as his upcoming book is an oral history of the NYHC scene (which I hope is more of the underrated bands like the latter, and less of the knuckle-dragger shit everyone already knows 100 times over). There're also some old live show pics of A.O.D., Madball and Judge (the latter of which is great if you like sweaty dudes pointing). Also interviewed is artist/photographer Fred Hammer who I'm not familiar with but he did a book called "The Power of Expression". The talks with Hammer goes into a lot regarding the Nardcore scene and his inspiration from it. Plus, there's an interview with a band featuring the ex-members of Underdog called Huge. The music reviews cover old and new HC/punk from the Crumbsuckers' *Early Years* album (zoinks!) to the latest Night Birds LP. Rounding this out is a punk/HC news section (which unlike certain crappy internet sites—deals with *actual* punk/HC bands). A pretty good effort even though I'm not the biggest fan of some of the stuff they cover. (JD)
102 Richmond Ave SE / Albuquerque, NM 87106

NUTS! #13 / $4
9 x 12 – printed – 14 pgs
Measuring zines makes me want to die. It's worse than filing taxes and it's half the reason my reviews are always late. I'm cheating, here actually: *NUTS!* is technically 9x12 inches folded-up and then folds out newspaper style, inky fingers and all. Have you really not seen an issue of *NUTS!* yet? If not, don't start with this one, because Goosebumps totally fucking sucks and you'll get bored and might give up. However, if you're already a fan, this third installment of "NY NUTS!" is redeemed by the following: giant full-color mutant masks by Crazy Spirit's Eugene Terry, a report back from Not Dead Yet! that left me cranky with jealousy, and a giant pullout poster by Laura Pall Mall from Austin, who was able to accurately illustrate my mind's interior from a thousand miles away. The Olympia connection is still alive, and Shannen Hansen from Hysterics is in print with a scene scoop! That was a relief. Basically: masks aside, everything else I liked about this issue had nothing to do with New York. I don't care what the Slice Harvester guy has to say about rap records, I like Ajax but their interview was boring, and I'll never get the three minutes of my life I spent reading about Mr. Goosebumps' song he wrote "from a woman's point of view." Yo, I haven't even heard it but he totally got it wrong! I snipped the band photo out of the cop-as-pig's mouth to make it cool again. You'll see what I mean. (FF)
PO Box 1959 / New York, NY 10013

RAZORCAKE #79 / $4
8.5 x 11 – printed – 112 pgs
I find it odd, yet pretty exciting, that I get to review this particular issue of *Razorcake*, since *MRR* just interviewed the two main contributors last month, and I've been thinking a lot about the differences between the two magazines lately. Lets be fair, and pretend you've never read, or even heard of *Razorcake* for just a few minutes. *Razorcake* is a volunteer run, non-profit, punk music magazine, (sorta) rising from the ashes of *Flipside*, and has been around for (damn I feel old) fourteen years. *Razorcake* has been known to cater to a slightly different crowd than *MRR*, and I don't think it's unfair, or a put down, to say that they appreciate pop punk and shirtless beardos a little bit more than we do here. To their credit, they are also a volunteer based rag, and the main editor claims a well put together piece on other types of underground music are totally acceptable…fair enough. There are some comix, a few columns, music, movie, and book reviews, and a few band interviews, but what really sticks out in this issue is an oral history of the Latino involvement of the early Hollywood punk scene, put together by Alice Bag. It's fucking great! There is also a pretty good article on class bigotry in higher education. My main problem with *Razorcake* is that the monthly columns aren't usually incredibly thought provoking, or even angry rants. They are mostly just stories about the one time they did this one thing and it reminds them of this one punk album now, which is fine, I guess. I suppose I don't want to read a magazine where every contributor is pissed off at every fucking thing in the entire world, but it would be nice to get a little piss and vinegar in a punk columns section. Sue me. If you've not read *Razorcake* in a while, or never given it a shot for whatever stupid reason, this is a great issue to read. (DZ)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042 / www.razorcake.org

RULES FOR PICKETING / $?
5.5 x 7.5 – printed – 26 pgs
NYY0/Affect has a penchant for compiling information to benefit radical change, a rather different approach than dogmatic theory you have to sort through just to find the point (and the point is usually a giant circle jerk of shitty old white dudes). Here you are presented with concrete examples to prove their point. Distributed during the ATU 1181 bus drivers' strike, this pamphlet shows the examples in which unions stifle labor movements. Agreements, rules, guidelines and structures are all reproduced, all con-

trolling every aspect of the picket from dress to demeanor to how far away you should stand next to each other. All this is conditioning to appease employers and exchange for scraps; begging for what is rightfully yours. (AP)
www.year0.org

THE SCREEVER #4 / $2, trades OK
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pgs
This zine really threw me for a loop. I am a total grandma punk but I had a lot of trouble wrapping my head around why anyone making a punker zine would want to fill it with material like bread baking and wicker furniture. There's even a review of an Agatha Christie book and a feature article on the writer's friend's quaint little candle and teapot shop. Also included are some interviews by UK black metal and screamo outfits that I hope I never have to listen to! I know, I know, I'm a huge hater, it's just the way my mom raised me. I appreciated the ongoing discussion of sexism, it was definitely a highlight for me. (MP)
89 Oak Street / Kingswinford / DY6 9LT, UK / thescreeve@hotmail.co.uk / thescreever.blogspot.co.uk

SHEEPLE #1 – free in NYC
8.5 x 11 – printed – 14 pgs
Finally! After years of being forced to read nothing but zines by plebs, a publication filled with enlightened thought and witty political cartoons finally evolves out of the primordial rabble. The only thing I could possibly compare this to would be the truth-filled memes and thought provoking discourse of /pol/—a corner of the internet that only the most well-read inhabit. I'm *sure* you already know of the connections between Zionist Israel and 9/11—but now you have a publication to give to a less enlightened friend. I also applaud whoever created the image of Uncle Sam riding in the back of an open-top Lincoln next to Jackie O. while being driven by Dick Cheney and Ben Bernake. Your razor wit, sir, rivals that of Jonathan Swift! (Another man, I'm sure, who despised having to live among all these idiotic troglodytes.) Your send up of Britney Spears is not only topical, but resonates strongly with those of us who can't imagine why anyone would ever dilute themselves with the banality of pop culture (which I'm sure we can both agree, should be "unpopular culture"—if only we lived in a better world). For all of you fellow gentlemen who feel a personal obligation to move the Bible to the fiction section of the bookstore, this magazine is perfect for you! Well done! *tips fedora* (FU)
Phil Schrader / PO Box 418 / New York, NY 10116

THE SODA KILLERS #6 / $? or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 30 pgs
The Soda Killers is a great music fanzine that has punk, hip-hop (really!) and some sick graffiti appreciation. There's everything you could want in a music zine: album reviews, show reviews, and even an interview with the band Condominium. In fact, the interview published was rejected from *MRR* since Condominium put a record out on Sub Pop. But now we're reviewing that interview! Punx is meta. Or something like that. It's a good interview, in any case, so read it if you have the chance. This is a cool zine and all you zine punks should check it out! (SF)
www.hotdogdayz.com

SPARE CHANGE #26 / $2 ppd, trades OK
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 40 pgs
My roommate and I had an argument about this zine. I didn't like that it was just a bunch of haiku's (that weren't good or amusing) and photocopied magazine subscription cards with handwritten messages like, "I love you, quit this stupid job and runaway with me." My roommate didn't like the haiku's either, but he said the messages on the subscription cards were cool and zines didn't have to be a certain way. Yeah, I guess. If you want a zine to flip through while you're bored and sitting on the couch or toilet and you love haiku's, then this issue is for you. (VX)
PO Box 6023 / Chattanooga, TN 37401

SPIDER SISTERS VOL. 1 / $3.50 US, $5 world, trades OK
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 22 pgs
It's a nice greeting to get this. Thick blindingly white paper with a weird black and white, grim, rough collage style all over the cover. Ransom letters spell out "after a slow start in competitive Punk the girls are beginning to catch the boys" flaunted with what I'm assuming are intended to be rather menacing spider webs. Bugs are always cool. I love bugs. *Spider Sisters* is a photo zine with some honestly confusing collage mixed in. It's of no real weighty matter though because the pictures shine despite being flanked with Doc Martens cut out from *Seventeen* magazine. It's news to me too. I found out that my old housemate from Indiana is in a band called Napalm Donut and my old friend Lee is singing again in a group called Hard Stripes. Richmond take note! It's got y'alls local flavor. Dirtier than the James, and just as contagious. (EC)
1103 West Franklin St. #3 / Richmond, VA 23220 / laurenberkeley@gmail.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #122/123 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 62 pgs
Long-running Midwest fanzine that has probably been out longer than I have been alive. Anyway, in this issue you can expect the usual of show reviews, band interviews and record reviews with politically relevant commentary thrown in between. Nervosas, Recreant and Jerusalem and the Starbaskets are interviewed. Show reviews of PNW queer band Fucking Dyke Bitches and Dick Binge, Thrashatarian, Viking Moses and hella others. Photospreads from True/False Film Fest and Como Girls Rock Camp. Last but no least, political essays on Pussy Riot and recent anti LGBQ legislation that has been flooding US politics in recent times. (AP)
PO BOX 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205 / ttwn@hotmail.com

TRUST #164/01 / 2.50 euros
8.5 x 11 – printed – 72 pgs – German
I've heard this zine rules. It's been around forever, like since the '80s, and is stacked with columns and interviews and reviews and really, (really!) beautiful photographs and layout. Everything just looks really cool. Here's a sample of what's in this issue: Bl'ast, Second Combat, Klaus Walter, Jakob Kapeller and Amanda Palmer. I only know her name because she wrote an open letter to Sinead O'Connor in response to *Sinead's* open letter to Miley Cyrus. Amanda's letter called attention to slut-shaming, and was pretty right on. For those who don't read German, check out their website, because the Goog-machine will translate it for you…(JB)
Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany / www.trust-zine.de

YOU POSE BUT WHY?
8.5 x 5 – copied – 22 pgs
Pretty rad zine that's heavily covering the underground grindcore scene. That's right: underground grind—no corporate logos and no Invisible Oranges-type "deep analysis." This comes with the flexi of the same name and interviews one of the bands from that release (Exacerbacion) as well as interviews with Adam Jennings of Winters in Osaka, Sick/Tired and Paucities. While this interview is pretty informative, it does rib the reader by saying he was gonna talk about his "love of professional wrestling." Maaan, did I feel ripped off by that. Hell, the dude is from Chicago—at *least* mention CM Punk or at the *very least* The Crusher! Anyway, the good thing was Jennings talking about playing at Obscene Extreme Fest and meeting people from Saudi Arabia, Columbia as well as touring in Mexico. Another good part of this zine is the short but thought-provoking piece from the guy behind Farmyard Boogie blog, which touches on food security and survival while living closer to nature. Also on the food tip is the article called "Grindcore Gourmand" this isn't some (*kack*) "rockstar kitchen" thing—instead it's practical advice on seasoning, how to make a vegetable stock and vinegar. Plus, there's a neat article about being a "grindcore family" man—i.e. living as a father with grind/punk D.I.Y. ethos. Finally, therere reviews of a few new releases by a numbers of grind/noisecore/HC bands.. Shocker: Unholy Grave has yet another split. Altogether a solid zine but it's in dire need of consistent fonts (i.e. make it all readable instead of changing it up for the sake of aesthetics (i.e.—the very metal/serif heavy metal font in the Exacerbacion interview). Check out the record this came with on To Live a Lie Records. (JD)
Pan Del Muerte Records / 2500 Candlewick Drive SE / Poplar Grove, IL 61065
To Live a Lie c/o Will Butler / 2825 Van Dyke Avenue / Raleigh, NC 27607-7021

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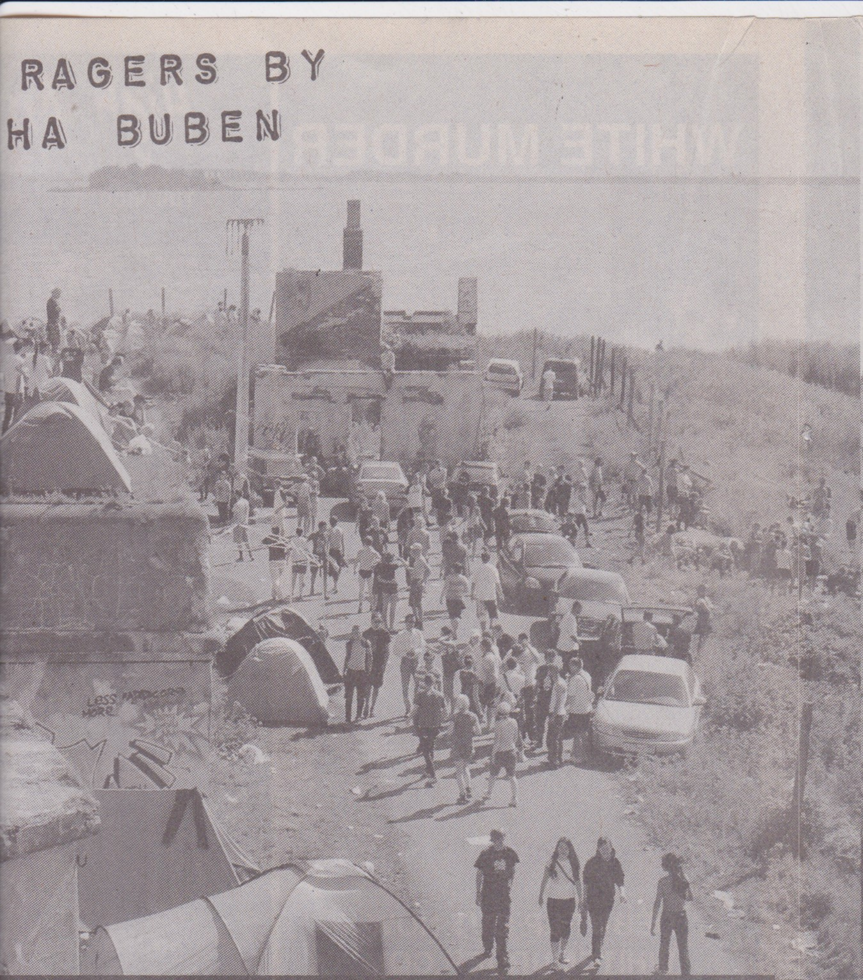
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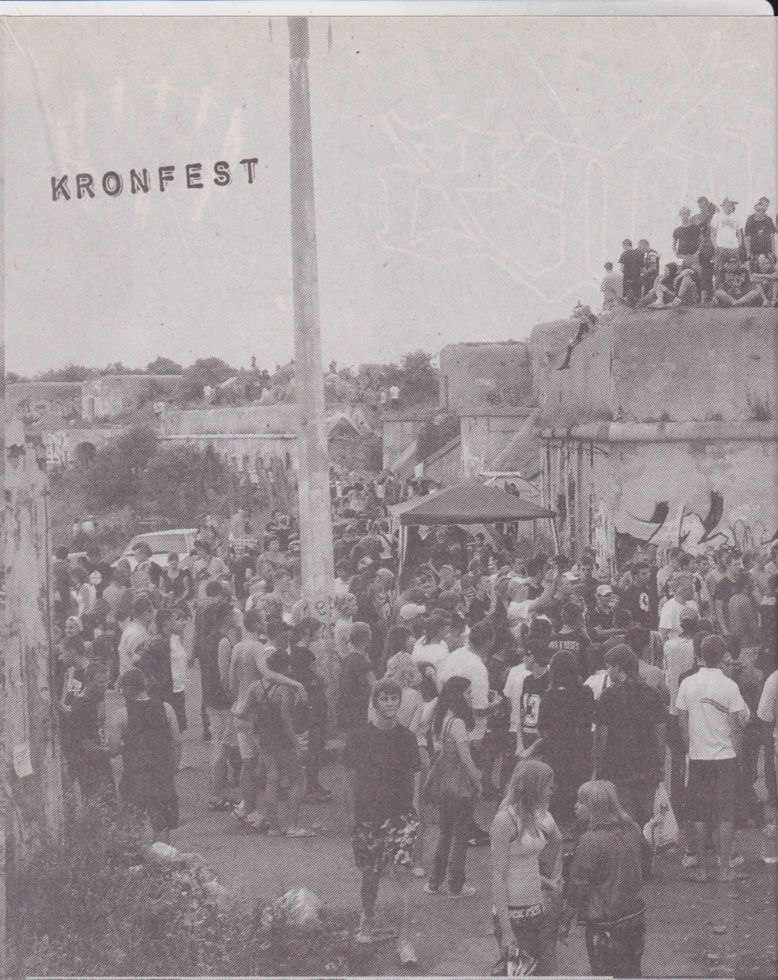
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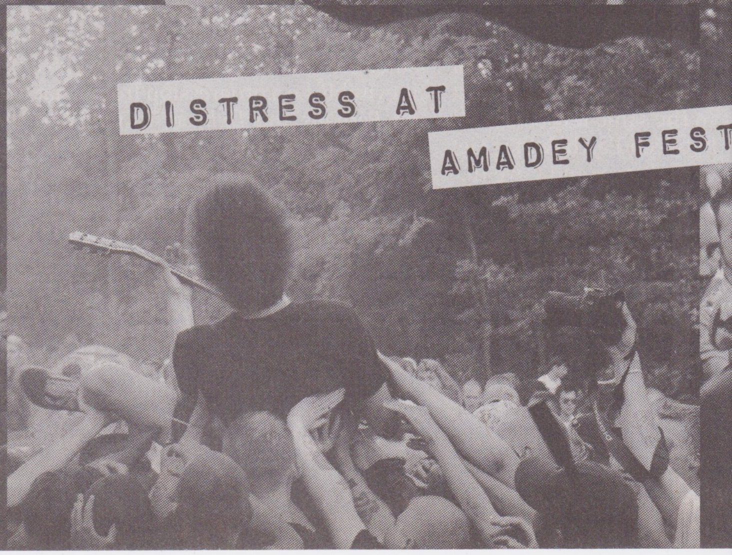
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